5
SUZUKA
KOUJI SEO

SUZUKA

Kouji Seo

TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED BY
David Ury

LETTERED BY
North Market Street Graphics

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Suzuka 5

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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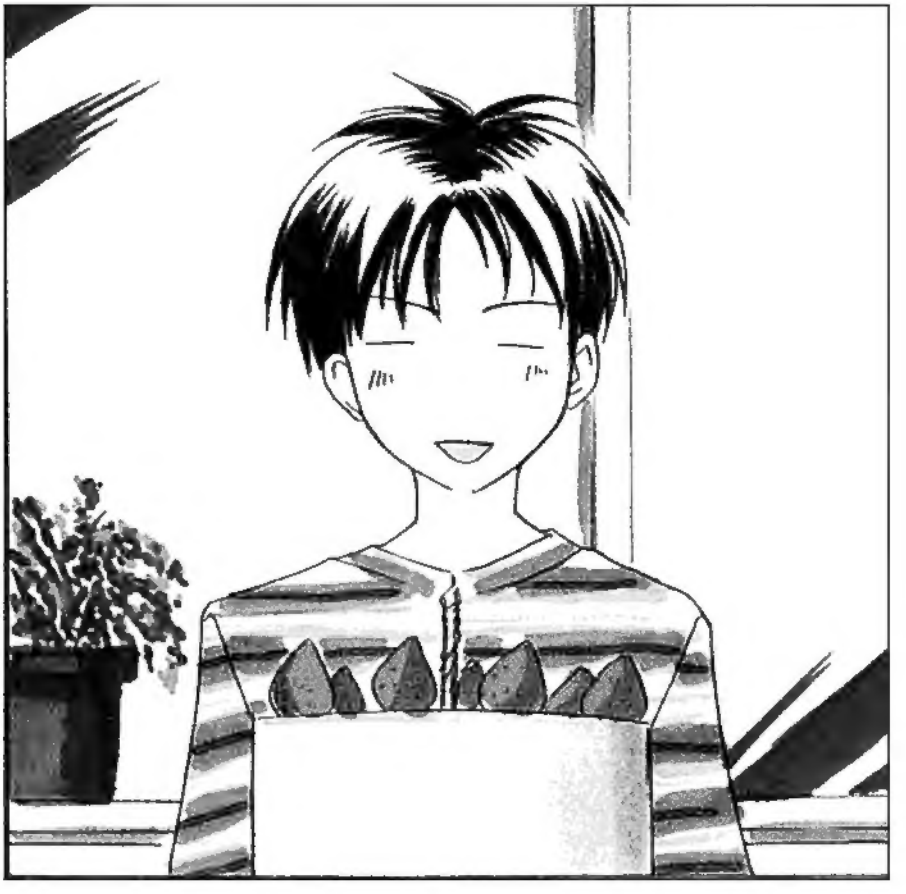
A Note from the Author



IT LOOKS LIKE SUZUKA *IS GOING TO MAKE IT TO ITS ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY, AND IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU LOYAL READERS. TO CELEBRATE THE OCCASION, I BOUGHT A CAKE AND PUT A SINGLE CANDLE IN IT. I HOPE NEXT YEAR I'LL BE ABLE TO CELEBRATE WITH TWO CANDLES.*

Honorifics Explained

Throughout the Del Rey Manga books, you will find Japanese honorifics left intact in the translations. For those not familiar with how the Japanese use honorifics and, more important, how they differ from American honorifics, we present this brief overview.

Politeness has always been a critical facet of Japanese culture. Ever since the feudal era, when Japan was a highly stratified society, use of honorifics—which can be defined as polite speech that indicates relationship or status—has played an essential role in the Japanese language. When addressing someone in Japanese, an honorific usually takes the form of a suffix attached to one's name (example: "Asuna-san"), is used as a title at the end of one's name, or appears in place of the name itself (example: "Negi-sensei," or simply "Sensei!").

Honorifics can be expressions of respect or endearment. In the context of manga and anime, honorifics give insight into the nature of the relationship between characters. Many English translations leave out these important honorifics and therefore distort the feel of the original Japanese. Because Japanese honorifics contain nuances that English honorifics lack, it is our policy at Del Rey not to translate them. Here, instead, is a guide to some of the honorifics you may encounter in Del Rey Manga.

-san: This is the most common honorific and is equivalent to Mr., Miss, Ms., or Mrs. It is the all-purpose honorific and can be used in any situation where politeness is required.

-sama: This is one level higher than "-san." It is used to confer great respect.

-dono: This comes from the word "tono," which means "lord." It is an even higher level than "-sama" and confers utmost respect.

-kun: This suffix is used at the end of boys' names to express familiarity or endearment. It is also sometimes used by men among friends, or when addressing someone younger or of a lower station.

-chan: This is used to express endearment, mostly toward girls. It is also used for little boys, pets, and even among lovers. It gives a sense of childish cuteness.

Bozu: This is an informal way to refer to a boy, similar to the English terms "kid" and "squirt."

Sempai/
Senpai: This title suggests that the addressee is one's senior in a group or organization. It is most often used in a school setting, where underclassmen refer to their upperclassmen as "sempai." It can also be used in the workplace, such as when a newer employee addresses an employee who has seniority in the company.

Kohai: This is the opposite of "sempai" and is used toward underclassmen in school or newcomers in the workplace. It connotes that the addressee is of a lower station.

Sensei: Literally meaning "one who has come before," this title is used for teachers, doctors, or masters of any profession or art.

[blank]: This is usually forgotten in these lists, but it is perhaps the most significant difference between Japanese and English. The lack of honorific means that the speaker has permission to address the person in a very intimate way. Usually, only family, spouses, or very close friends have this kind of permission. Known as *yobisute,* it can be gratifying when someone who has earned the intimacy starts to call one by one's name without an honorific. But when that intimacy hasn't been earned, it can be very insulting.

SUZUKA

5

Kouji Seo

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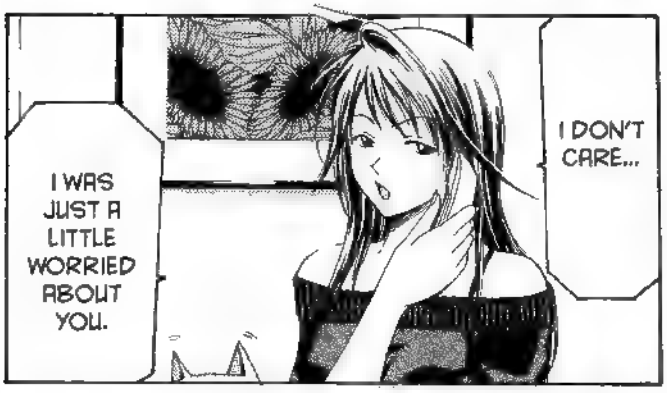
SUZUKA

#30 WAR

SOMEONE INVITED ME TO GO TO A WATER PARK.
I TOLD YOU...


I WAS JUST A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
I DON'T CARE...

W-WELL...
YOU USED TO COME VISIT KAZUKI-KUN'S GRAVE EVERY TIME YOU HAD A BREAK.

AND YOU WANT TO GO TO THE WATER PARK WITH HIM.
OH, I GET IT. YOU MET A GUY, DIDN'T YOU?

OF COURSE.
YEAH, WITH EVERY-BODY.
TAP
WHAT DO YOU CARE WHERE I GO ON MY BREAK?
TAP

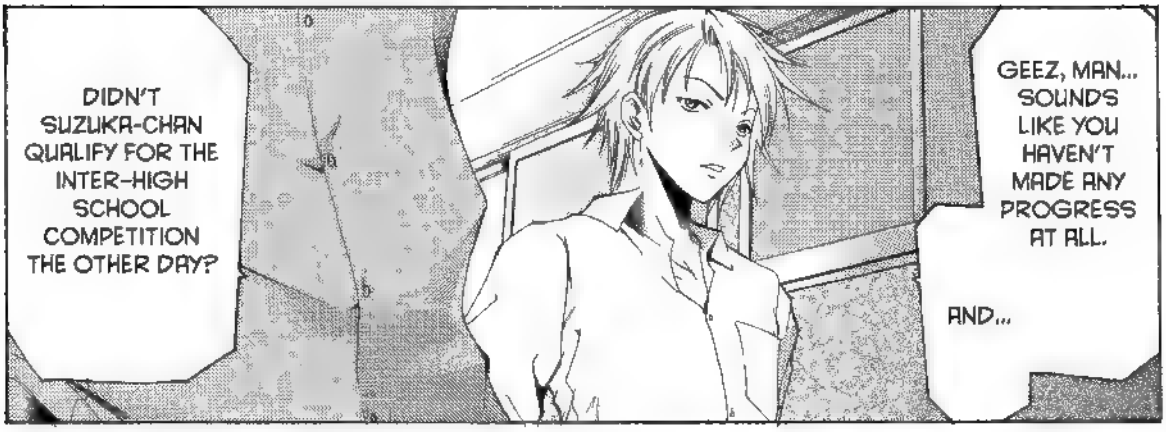
WHA-?
OF COURSE NOT! ARE YOU CRAZY?
BZZT
BZZT
PING
IS THAT ALL YOU CALLED ABOUT?
I'M HANGING UP!
AH... WAIT, WAIT-
CLICK
BEEP
BEEP
SHE'S SO OBVIOUS.
FWISH
GRR
FWISH
OH WELL, I'M HAPPY FOR HER.
WOW, THIS GUY KEPT SUZUKA HOME FOR TWO BREAKS IN A ROW.
CLICK

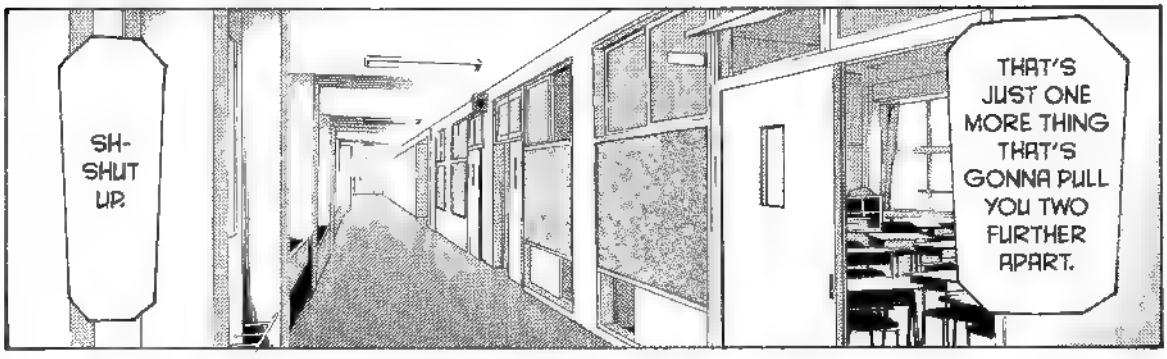
HE MUST REALLY BE SOMETHING.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1-B
I MEAN, YOU'RE NOT EVEN THE ONE WHO INVITED HER.
STEP
STEP
MAYBE SHE JUST FELT LIKE GOING TO THE WATER PARK.

WELL... SHE WENT TO THE WATER PARK WITH YOU AND A BUNCH OF OTHER PEOPLE, RIGHT?
SO WHO KNOWS IF SHE LIKES YOU OR NOT?

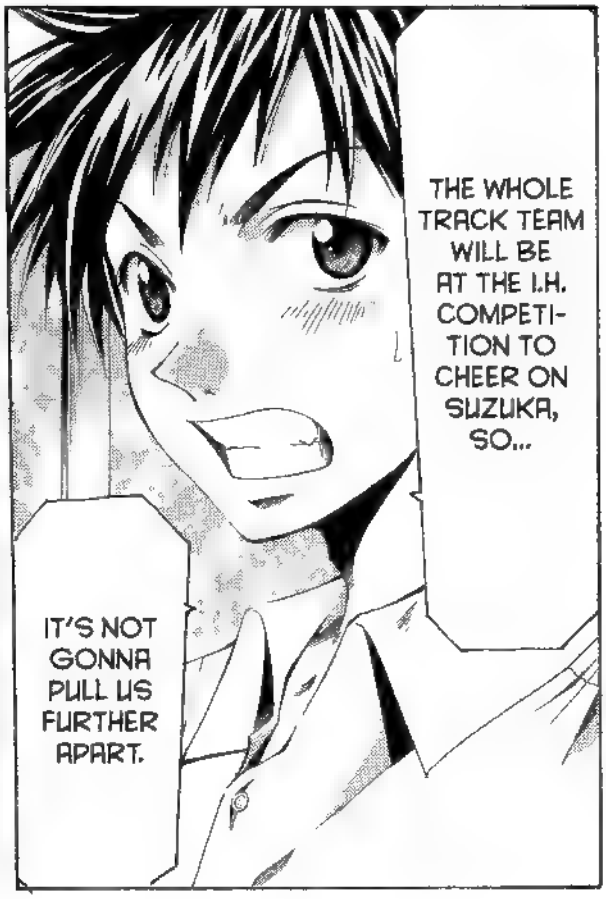
YEAH, YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT.
SHE DID SEEM LIKE SHE WAS HAVING FUN.
WITHOUT ME...


DIDN'T SUZUKA-CHAN QUALIFY FOR THE INTER-HIGH SCHOOL COMPETITION THE OTHER DAY?
GEEZ, MAN... SOUNDS LIKE YOU HAVEN'T MADE ANY PROGRESS AT ALL.
AND...


SH-SHUT UP.
THAT'S JUST ONE MORE THING THAT'S GONNA PULL YOU TWO FURTHER APART.

THAT'S GOOD.
OH YEAH?

AND...
AFTER TALKING TO ASAHINA FOR THE LAST FEW DAYS...


THE WHOLE TRACK TEAM WILL BE AT THE I.H. COMPETITION TO CHEER ON SUZUKA, SO...
IT'S NOT GONNA PULL US FURTHER APART.

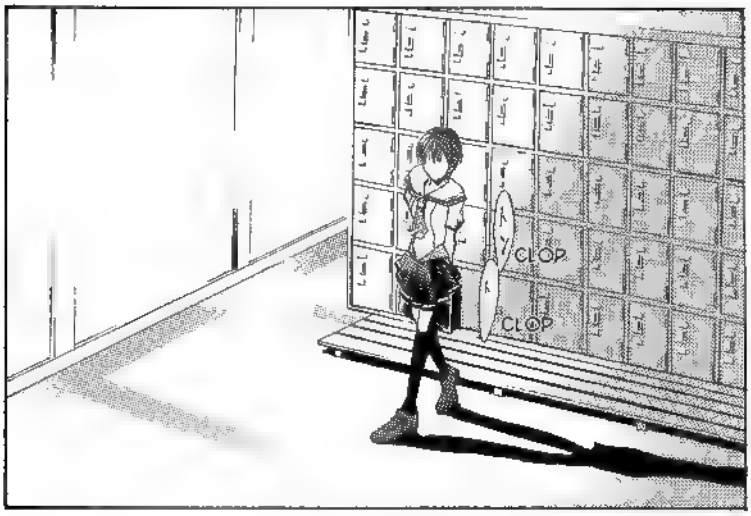
I REALIZED THAT SHE MAY NOT BE IN LOVE WITH ME, BUT...
I'M PRETTY SURE SHE DOESN'T HATE ME EITHER, AND RIGHT NOW, THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.
.....
HMM...
I DON'T KNOW, DUDE...I STILL THINK STALKING HER LIKE THAT IS PRETTY DESPER-ATE.
1-C
ガラ
SLIDE
I'M NOT STALKING HER!
ガラ
SLIDE
AH, YAMATO-KUN.

WHAT PERFECT TIMING! CAN I SEE YOUR NOTES FROM THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY?
I MISSED CLASS BECAUSE OF THE COMPETI-TION.
HUH? OH, YEAH...
DID YOU WRITE EVERY-THING DOWN?
UH... HERE THEY ARE.
OF COURSE I DID!
YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?
WHY IS SHE ASKING AKITSUKI-KUN OF ALL PEOPLE?
SHUDDER
SHUDDER
FLIP パラ
FLIP パラ

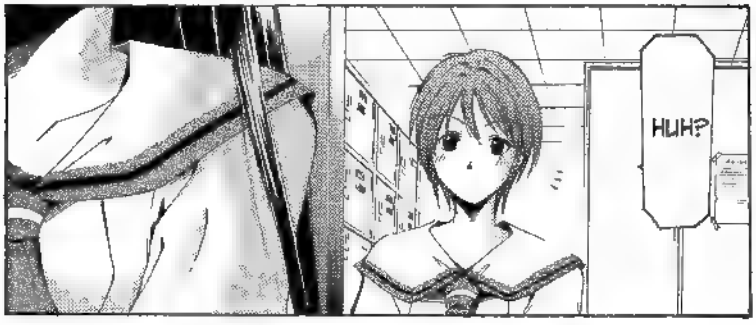
HUH?
SLAM
NEVER MIND.
LOOK!
FWUP
YOU CAN TOO READ IT.
YOUR HAND-WRITING IS SO BAD I CAN'T EVEN READ IT.
I'LL JUST BOR-ROW MIKI'S.
HUH? WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YEAH RIGHT.
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN READ THAT CHICKEN SCRATCH!

JUST WHEN I THOUGHT THEY WERE FINALLY START-ING TO GET ALONG...
GUESS I WAS JUST IMAG-INING THINGS.
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH MY WRITING!
HEY! WAIT!
YOU CAN READ IT, CAN'T YOU?
I DON'T KNOW.
TRY SQUINTING YOUR EYES!
IT'S LIKE TRYING TO READ HIERO-GLYPH-ICS.

キーン
DING
コーン
DONG
カーン
DING

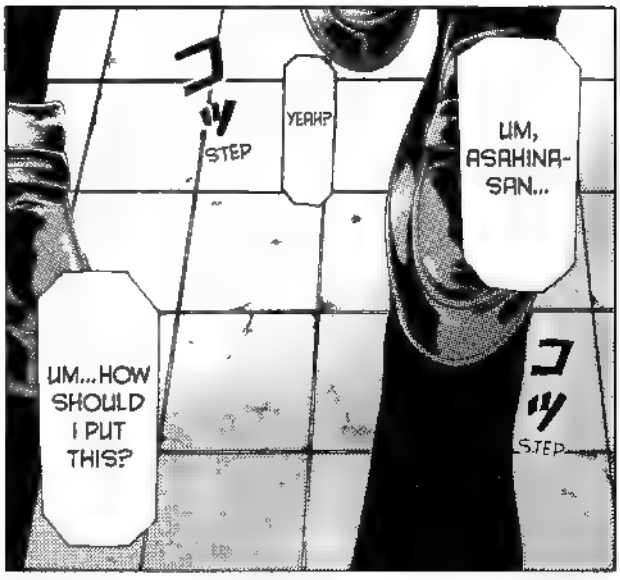

CLOP
CLOP

SLAM


HUH?

AH...
ASA-
HINA-
SAN.

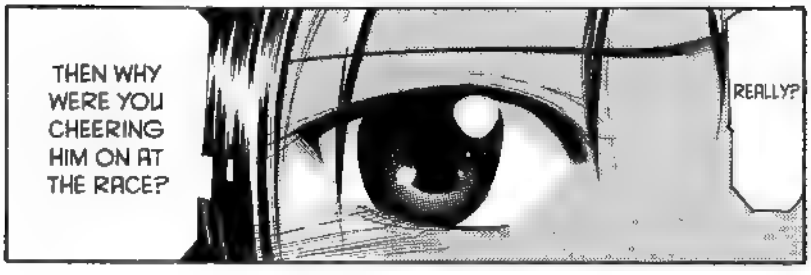
HONOKA-CHAN...
WHAT'S UP?
YOU MEETING SOMEONE HERE?
N-NO...
UM...
?
I-I WAS HOP-ING...
...WE COULD WALK HOME TO-GETHER, ASAHINA-SAN.
T-TO-GETH-ER?
W-WELL, WE...WE BOTH GO THE SAME WAY, SO... DO YOU MIND?
NO, GUESS NOT.


UM, ASAHINA-SAN...
YEAH?
コツ STEP
UM...HOW SHOULD I PUT THIS?
コツ STEP

YOU AND AKITSUKI-KUN...
...ARE PRETTY... CLOSE, RIGHT?

YEAH, YOU GUYS ARE ALWAYS TALKING AND LAUGHING.
NO, WE'RE NOT.
I'M USUALLY JUST YELLING AT HIM.

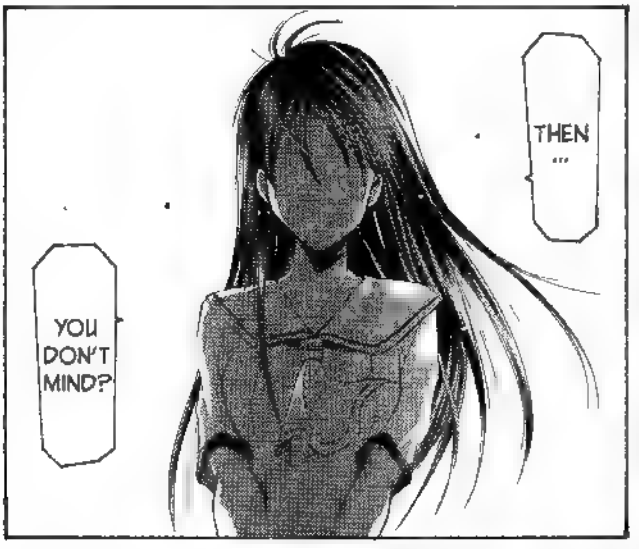
HUH?
DOES IT LOOK THAT WAY?


REALLY?
THEN WHY WERE YOU CHEERING HIM ON AT THE RACE?

HOW COULD YOU EVEN THINK WE'RE CLOSE?
ME AND HIM? COME ON!

I MEAN, IT'S ALMOST AS IF THEY'RE...
THE TWO OF THEM DISAPPEARED ON THE WAY BACK FROM THE WATER PARK.
THEY ALWAYS STRETCH TOGETHER, AND...

?
WHAT'S WRONG?


THEN ...
YOU DON'T MIND?

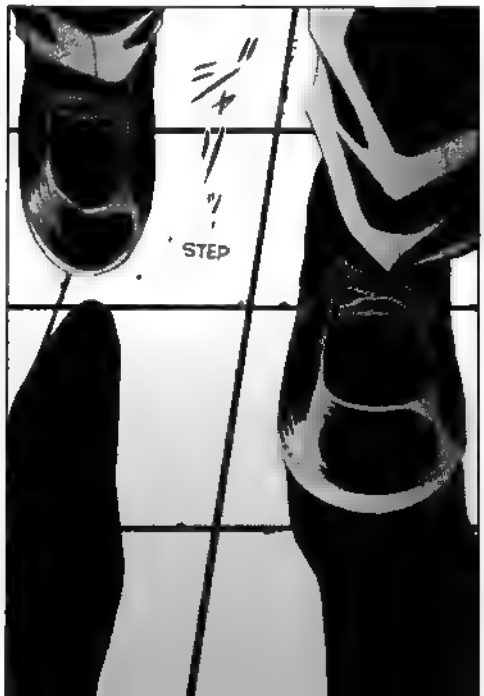
HUH?
MIND WHAT?

IF I...
...TELL AKITSUKI-KUN THAT I'M IN LOVE WITH HIM!
WHAT?

I'M IN LOVE WITH AKITSUKI-KUN, AND...
I HAVE BEEN SINCE BEFORE YOU EVEN MET HIM, ASAHINA-SAN!
OH, I GET IT...
YOU MET A GUY, DIDN'T YOU?
I...
.....
BECAUSE AFTER SEEING YOU TWO TOGETHER, I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU LIKED AKITSUKI-KUN.
SO I...
WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS?
.....

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU ACTUALLY THOUGHT I LIKED YAMATO-KUN!

……!
!

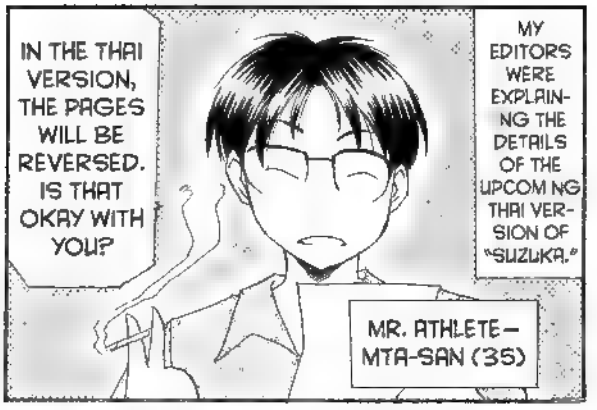

STEP

O-OH NO...
HE OVER-HEARD!
WHOOSH
A"
Y"
YA-MATO-KUN...
HUH?
IS SOME-THING WRONG WITH HONOKA-CHAN?
.....

I—
LISTEN...
WH-WHAT I SAID JUST NOW WAS...

I KNOW. FORGET IT.
DON'T WORRY. I KNOW YOU DON'T LIKE ME...
...ASAHINA.

YOU'D BETTER HURRY HOME, OR YOU'LL MISS DINNER!
UH...
UM...
HYUUU

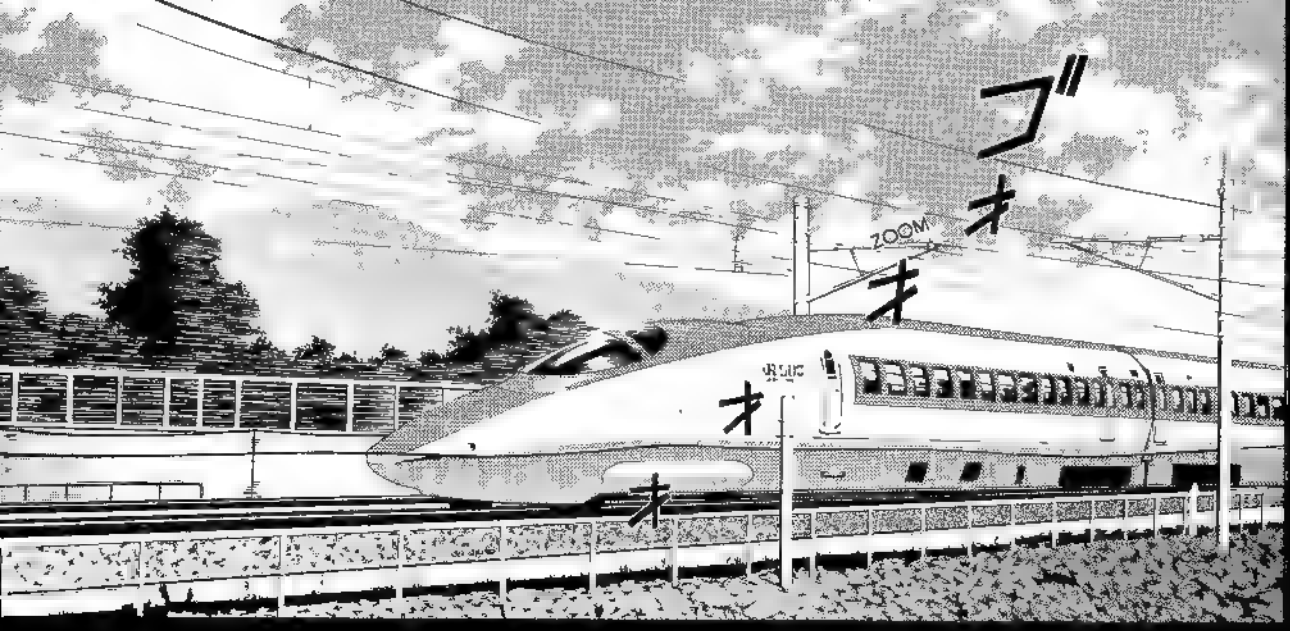

MY EDITORS WERE EXPLAIN-NG THE DETAILS OF THE UPCOM NG THAI VER-SION OF "SUZUKA."
IN THE THAI VERSION, THE PAGES WILL BE REVERSED. IS THAT OKAY WITH YOU?
MR. ATHLETE— MTA-SAN (35)

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER SEVENTEEN [I DON'T REALLY MIND, BUT...]

KYAA
KYAA
ASAHIYU BATHS
IT FEELS SO GOOD.
パシャ
SPLASH
パシャ
SPLASH
QUIT ACTING LIKE A LITTLE KID. IF YOU'RE THAT HOT, WHY DON'T YOU GO TO A REAL POOL?
AHH, SUMMER'S FINALLY HERE!
AWWW, ARE YOU JEALOUS OF MY HOT BODY?
OH YEAH? WHY DON'T YOU PUT ON A FREAKING BATHING SUIT?
SPLASH

SUZUKA

#33 LIPS


ゴオオオ
ZOOM

I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY'RE HOLDING THE I.H. COMPETITION IN HIROSHIMA.
HERE I AM ON A TRAIN HEADING RIGHT BACK TO MY HOMETOWN.

CHATTER
CHATTER
DON'T WANT THIS!
CHATTER
HA HA HA.
HERE COMES HER SUGAR DADDY

SLAM
HEY!

OUCH!
SQUEEZE
SQUEEZE
LISTEN TO ME WHEN I'M TALKING TO YOU!

I'LL WORK EXTRA HARD.
UH-HUH. OKAY.

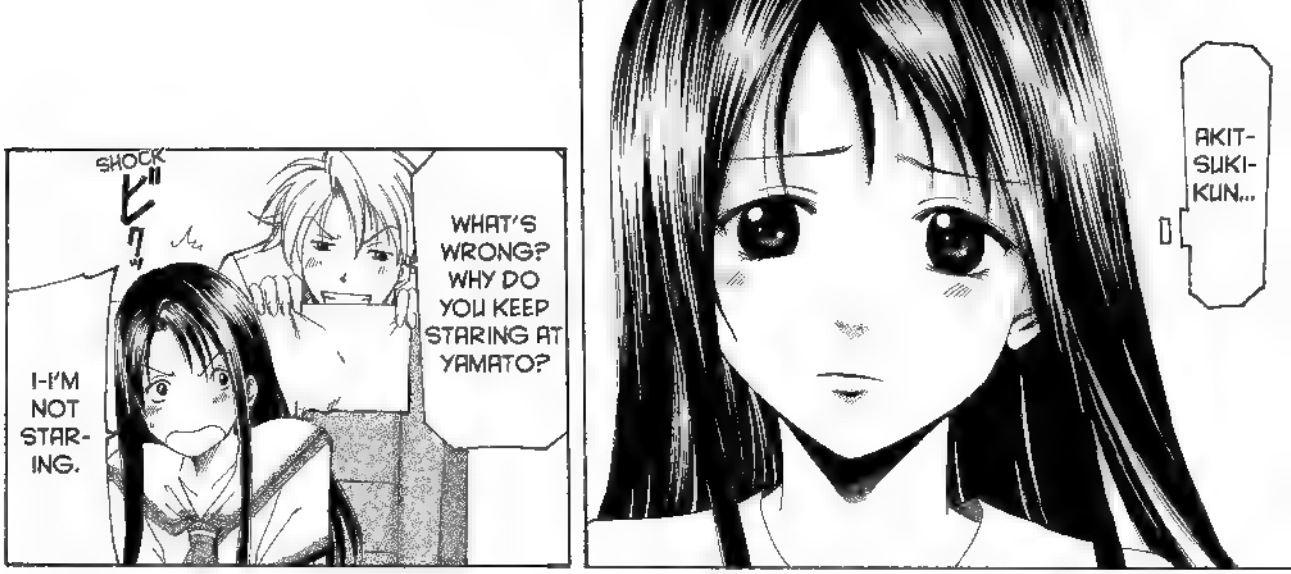
I'M RETIRING AFTER THIS COMPETITION.
NUGGIE
NUGGIE
SO I NEED YOU TO WORK EXTRA HARD.

THWACKA
THWACKA
WORKING EXTRA HARD ISN'T ENOUGH. YOU'VE GOTTA MAKE IT INTO THE I.H. COMPETITION. SHOW SOME SPIRIT.

HEY, AKITSUKI! WAIT UP!
IF I SIT WITH HIM ANY LONGER, THEY'LL CARRY ME AWAY IN A STRETCHER.

AS SOON AS WE GET THERE, I'M PUTTING YOU ON A SPECIAL REGIMEN...
UH, I'M GONNA GO BUY A SODA.

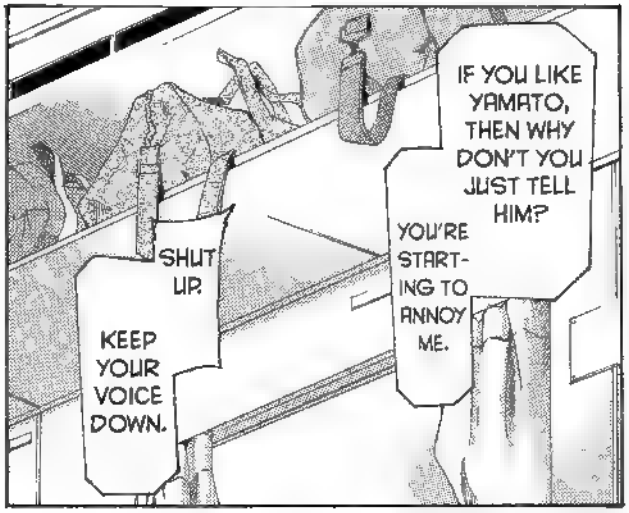
NO.
YOINK
AH, ASA-HINA.
I'M GO-ING TO GET A SODA. WANT ANY-THING TO DRINK?
WELL... ARE YOU HUNGRY?
I COULD STOP BY THE SNACK BAR.
NO OFFENSE, BUT...
S-SURE ...
SORRY.
COULD YOU JUST LEAVE ME ALONE?
I'M TRY-.NG TO CONCEN-TRATE.
SHE'S BEEN ACTING REALLY COLD EVER SINCE THAT DAY.
BUT I DIDN'T EVEN DO ANYTHING.
CLOP
CLOP


AKIT-
SUKI-
KUN...

SHOCK
ビク!!
I-I'M NOT STAR-ING.
WHAT'S WRONG? WHY DO YOU KEEP STARING AT YAMATO?

I JUST WANT TO SUPPORT THE TEAM AT THE I.H. COMPETI-TION.
NEXT STOP: NAGOYA
WHY ARE YOU EVEN HERE, HATTORI-KUN? YOU'RE NOT ON THE TRACK TEAM.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?
OH...


IF YOU LIKE YAMATO, THEN WHY DON'T YOU JUST TELL HIM?
YOU'RE START-ING TO ANNOY ME.
SHUT UP.
KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN.

ANYBODY CAN COME ALONG AS LONG AS THEY GET PERMISSION FROM THE SCHOOL.
I FIGURED I'D BE BORED DURING SUMMER BREAK ANYWAY, SO...

LAST TIME I TOLD HIM HOW I FELT, HE DIDN'T EVEN HEAR ME...
IT WAS HARD ENOUGH JUST SAYING IT ONCE.
IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS, BUT...
WHILE YOU'RE SITTING ON YOUR HANDS, SOME OTHER GIRL MIGHT SNATCH HIM UP, YOU KNOW?
.....
GLANCE ちら…
SOME OTHER GIRL?
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU ACTUALLY THOUGHT...
...I LIKED YAMATO-KUN!
THAT'S WHAT ASAHINA-SAN SAID...
BUT...

WE'RE STAYING IN THIS DUMP?
WAH, ARE YOU KIDDING ME?

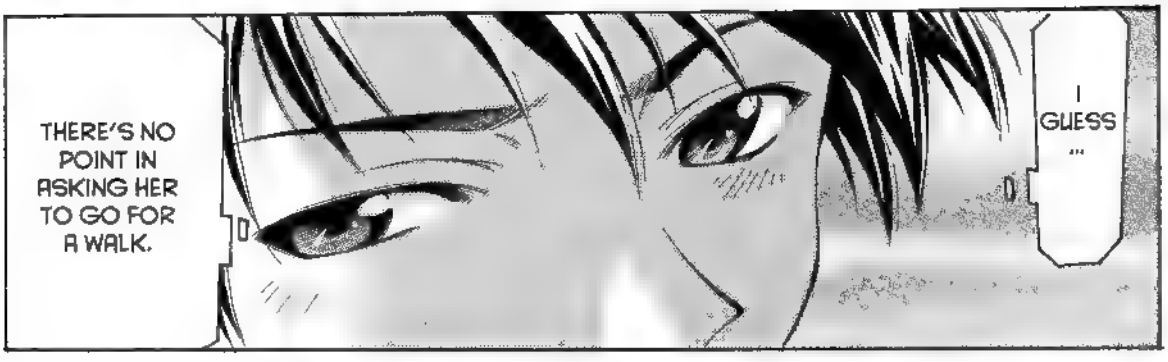
GOD, WHAT A CHEAPSKATE.
I HAD TO WORK MY ASS OFF JUST TO FIND A PLACE THAT WE COULD AFFORD.
QUIT COMPLAINING. WE'RE STAYING FOR TEN WHOLE NIGHTS, MAN. DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH THAT COSTS?

OKAY, WE'VE GOT FREE TIME UNTIL DINNER.
EVERYBODY MEET AT THE DINING HALL AT SIX!
YES, SIR.
WANNA GO HANG OUT OVER THERE?
WHAT'S THAT THING AT HIS FEET?
A DISCUS.

OKITA INN

YES, SIR!

I WANT EVERY-BODY WHO'S GONNA BE COMPETING TOMORROW TO TAKE IT EASY AND REST UP.
IS THAT CLEAR?


THERE'S NO POINT IN ASKING HER TO GO FOR A WALK.
I GUESS ...

SORRY, BUT I DON'T REALLY KNOW MY WAY AROUND DOWN-TOWN.
HEY, YAMATO. WANNA GO PICK UP CHICKS?
SHOW ME AROUND HIRO-SHIMA.

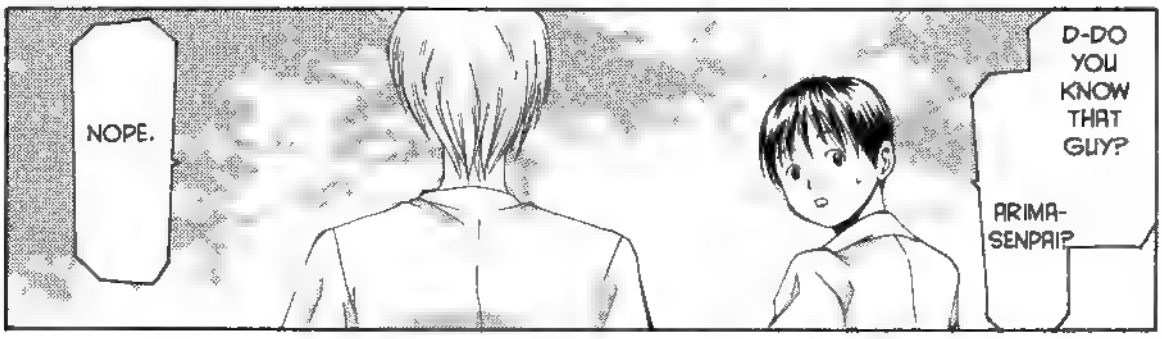
AKITSUKI -KUN DOESN'T LOOK TOO HAPPY.
I WON-DER WHAT'S WRONG.

LET'S GO FIND SOME CHICKS!
HEY, COME ON, YAMA-TO!

EVERY-BODY MUST THINK I'M NOT EVEN TAK NG THIS SERI-OUSLY.
I'M JUST HERE TO CHEER THE TEAM ON, SO...

OH WELL
I'LL DEFINITELY QUALIFY NEXT YEAR
HURRY IT UP WILL YA?
...!
STOP PUT-TERING AROUND LIKE AN OLD MAN JESUS CHRIST!
SORRY!
IT'S... WHAT'S HIS NAME... ARIMA?

H-
HEY...
YOU STAYING AROUND HERE, TOO-
AH.

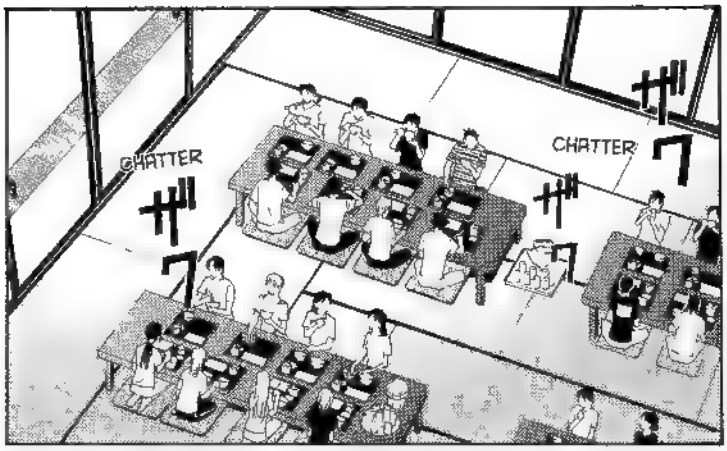

NOPE.
D-DO YOU KNOW THAT GUY?
ARIMA-SENPAI?

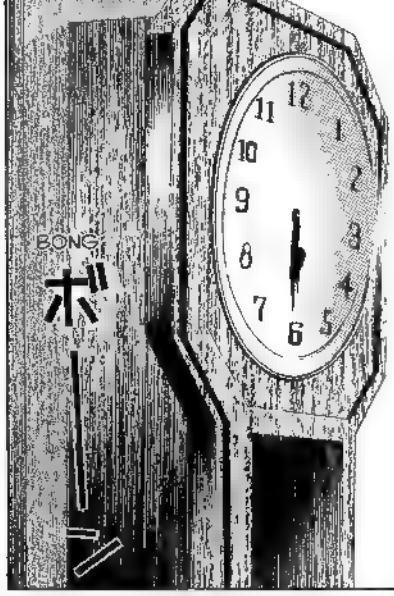
I'M TRYING TO CONCEN-TRATE.
NO OFFENSE, BUT COULD YOU JUST LEAVE ME ALONE...

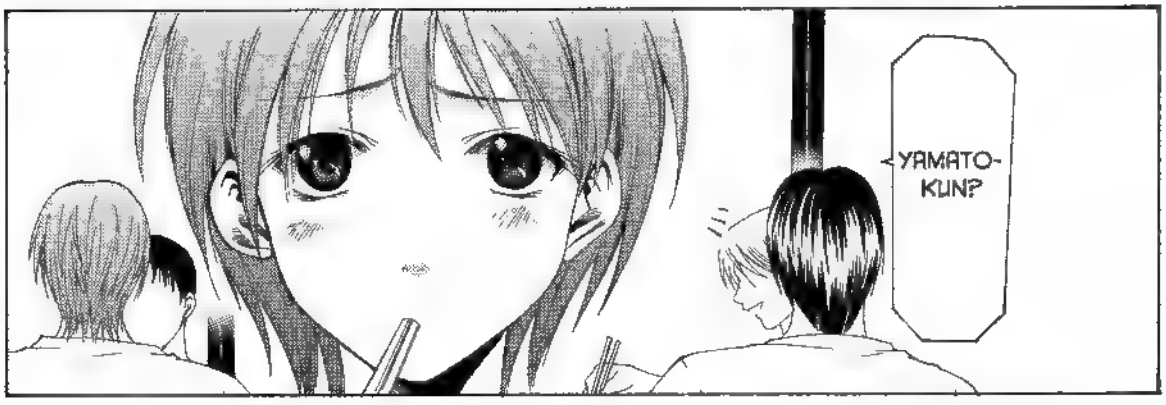
HE MADE IT...
...TO THE I.H. COMPE-TITION...

MAYBE THE REASON SUZUKA AND I ARE SO DISTANT...
...HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH ME LOSING TO ARIMA.

HEY, WANNA SET OFF SOME FIRE-WORKS AFTER DINNER?
YOU DON'T HAVE ANY PLANS, DO YOU?
HA-HASHI-BA.
WHY THE GLOOMY FACE, AKITSUKI?
STEP
HEY, WAIT...
NAH, I CAN'T.
AKITSUKI.
THE CAPTAIN WANTS ME TO DO SOME LAPS.


CHATTER
CHATTER

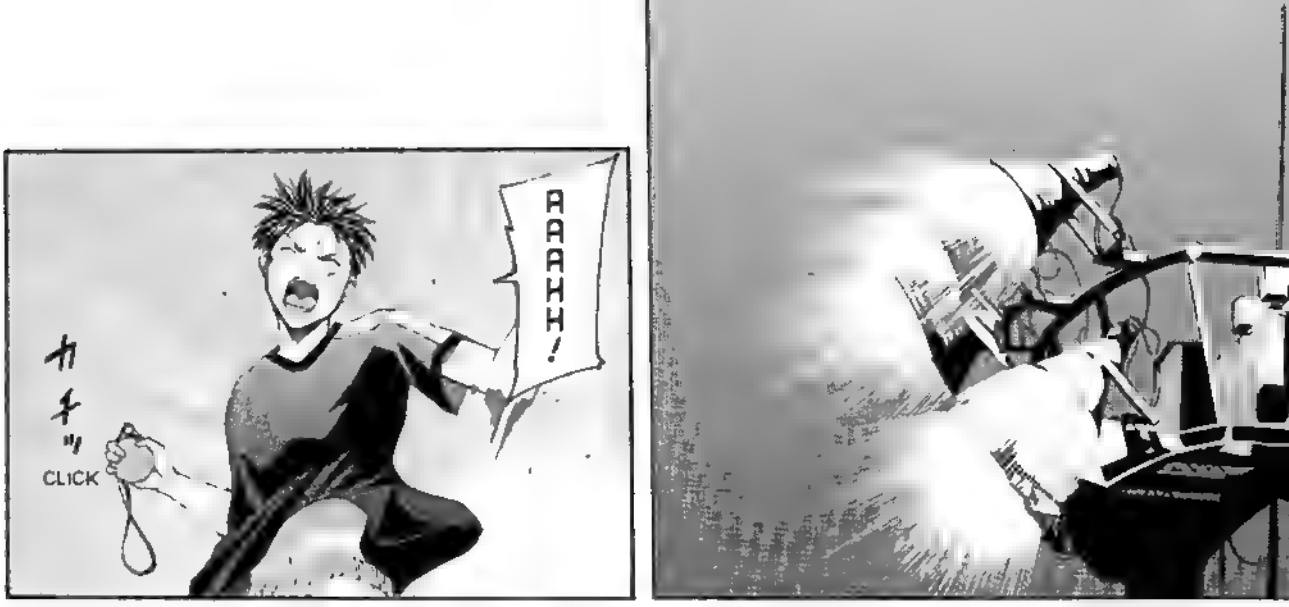

BONG


YAMATO-KUN?

IF YOU'RE NOT GONNA EAT THAT TOMATO, I'LL TAKE IT.

YEAH...
I DON'T KNOW, BUT...HE SEEMED REALLY UPSET ABOUT SOME-THING.
HE'S BEEN REALLY DOWN EVER SINCE WE GOT HERE.

PRES-SURE?
HE'S ONLY BEEN ON THE TEAM FOR A MONTH OR TWO. IT TAKES LONGER THAN THAT TO IMPROVE YOUR TIME.
HE HASN'T REALLY IMPROVED HIS TIME LATELY.
MAYBE HE'S STARTING TO FEEL THE PRES-SURE.
.....
BECAUSE YOU GUYS ARE SUCH GOOD FRIENDS.
WE ARE NOT...
EXACTLY. YOU SHOULD TELL HIM THAT.
I'M SURE HE'D FEEL BETTER IF HE HEARD IT FROM YOU.
HUH? WHY ME?
WHATEVER! ANYWAY, HE'S GONNA BE DOING LAPS ALL BY HIMSELF AFTER DINNER...
WHY DON'T YOU GO JOIN HIM ON THE TRACK?
HUH?
NO WAY! IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS.
SU ZUKA ..


AAAH!
カチッ
CLICK

0:00 127

AHHH, TIME FOR A BREAK. I'M BEAT.
ドカ
SLUMP...

SHIT.
PANT
PANT
PANT
I CAN'T BEAT MY TIME...

カッ
STEP

IT'S NOT LIKE TRAINING NOW IS GONNA MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE ANYWAY. I STILL WON'T BE ABLE TO RUN IN TOMORROW'S RACE.

AH, AKITSUKI-KUN.
KOYOKA-CHAN?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING OUT HERE?
UM...I WAS JUST WONDER-ING HOW YOU WERE DOING, AKITSUKI-KUN.
HA, HA. I WAS DOING FINE UNTIL A SECOND AGO.
.....

HE'S BEEN DOWN IN THE DUMPS SINCE WE GOT HERE.
AKITSUKI-KUN SEEMED REALLY UPSET.

.....

OH FINE, I'LL GO.
OKITA INN
ガヤ

MIND IF I...
...SIT NEXT TO YOU?
UH, GO AHEAD

HE'S DEFINITELY...
...UPSET ABOUT SOMETHING.

I HAD SECONDS OF THE MISO SOUP.
I HOPE I DON'T GET FAT.
HUH?
DINNER WAS PRETTY GOOD, WASN'T IT?
I WOULDN'T WORRY TOO MUCH.
HA, HA.
HUH?
HEY...
WHAT'S WRONG, AKITSUKI-KUN?
YOU JUST SEEM KIND OF DOWN LATELY.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
.....

YOUR CONFI-DENCE?
I KIND OF LOST MY CONFI-DENCE
SIGH
WHEN I FIRST STARTED RUNNING TRACK, EVERYBODY KEPT TALKING ABOUT HOW FAST I WAS, BUT...
I ENDED UP GETTING KILLED AT THE REGIONALS AND MAKING A TOTAL ASS OF MYSELF
I DIDN'T EVEN MAKE IT INTO THE I.H., BUT THAT DIDN'T STOP ME FROM TAGGING ALONG LIKE SOME LOSER
THE CAPTAIN HAS ALL THESE BIG EXPECTA-TIONS, BUT...
I DON'T KNOW...
D-DON'T SAY THAT...
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT I'M DOING HERE

I MEAN, I JUST DON'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES.
I JUST THINK THE PEOPLE WHO MADE IT INTO THE I.H. ARE ON A TOTALLY DIFFERENT LEVEL.

YOU HAVE REAL TALENT, AKITSUKI-KUN!
THAT'S NOT TRUE...

HUH?

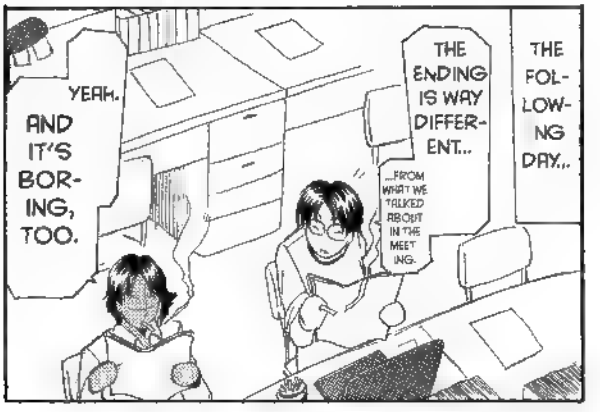
I THINK YOU'RE REALLY COOL.
I BET YOU'LL TAKE FIRST IN THE I.H. NEXT YEAR.

SOMETIMES I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE HOW FAST YOU ARE.
AND YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING UP WITH YOUR TRAINING JUST LIKE THE CAPTAIN ASKED.

.....
GOOD.
THIS IS ALL I ASK FOR...
.....
ニコッ
GRIN
THANKS. I FEEL A LITTLE BETTER NOW.
ニコッ
STEP
...JUST BEING ABLE TO SHARE A MOMENT ALONE WITH HIM.
.....!

AH!
HUH?
WHAT'S WRONG?
SQUEEZE
NO!
DON'T TURN AROUND.
I WANT YOU ALL TO MYSELF.

WOW, SEO-SAN REALLY THINKS ABOUT WHAT HE DRAWS.
SO...I DEFINITELY DO KEEP THAT IN MIND
SO..
A JOURNALIST CAME TO INTERVIEW ME FOR AN ARTICLE HE WAS DOING CALLED "THE WAY OF MANGA."
EDITOR S-KI-SAN (29)



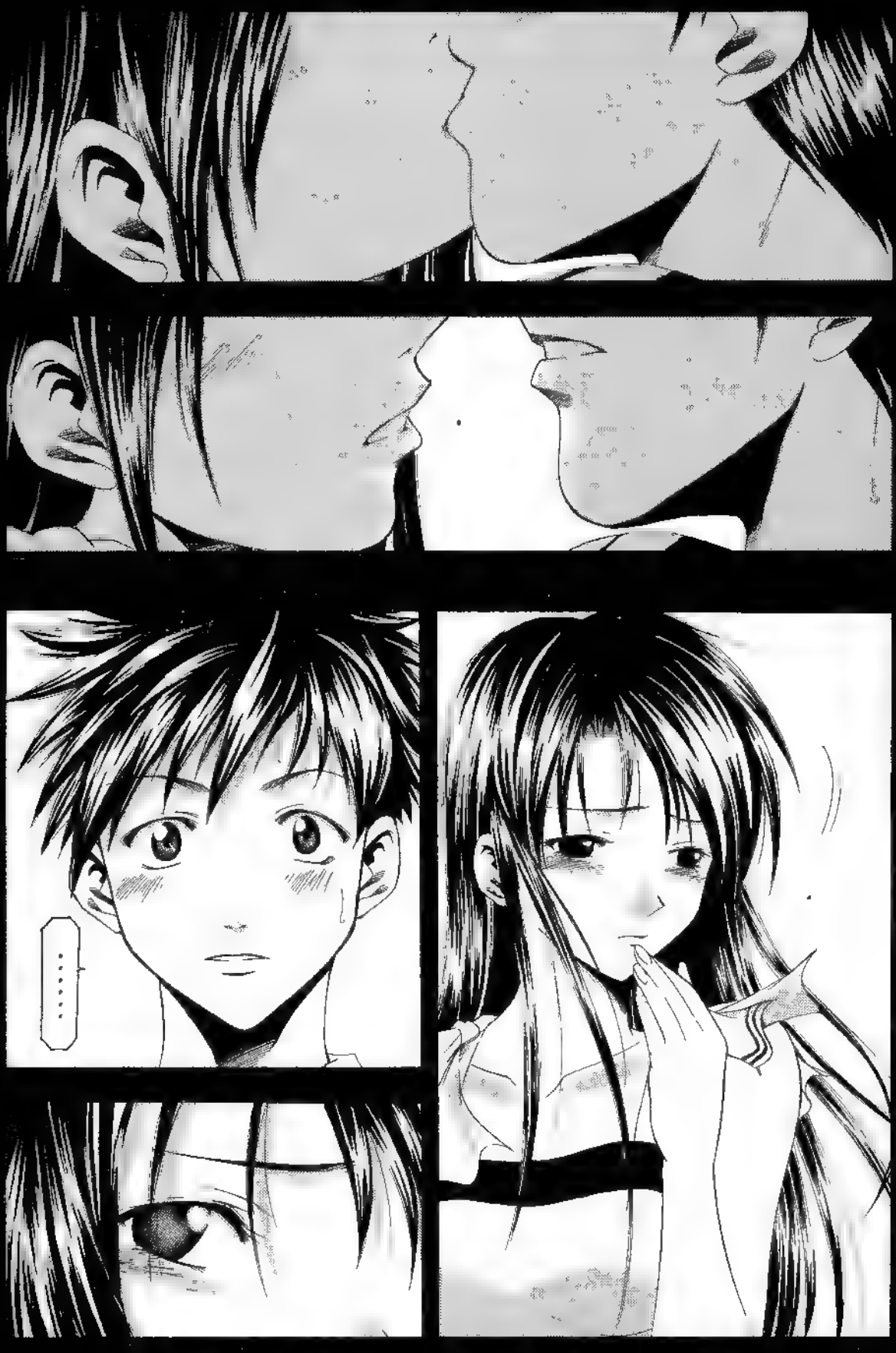
SEO-SAN THINKS REALLY HARD ABOUT HIS STORIES.
HE MUST BE SETTING SOMETHING UP.
BUT THERE'S GOTTA BE SOME DEEP HIDDEN MEANING TO THIS!

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER EIGHTEEN
MANGA CRIT

FOR A MOMENT...
I HAD NO IDEA WHAT THE HELL WAS HAPPENING.
THE ONLY THING I REMEMBER IS...

SUZUKA

#34 TREMORS

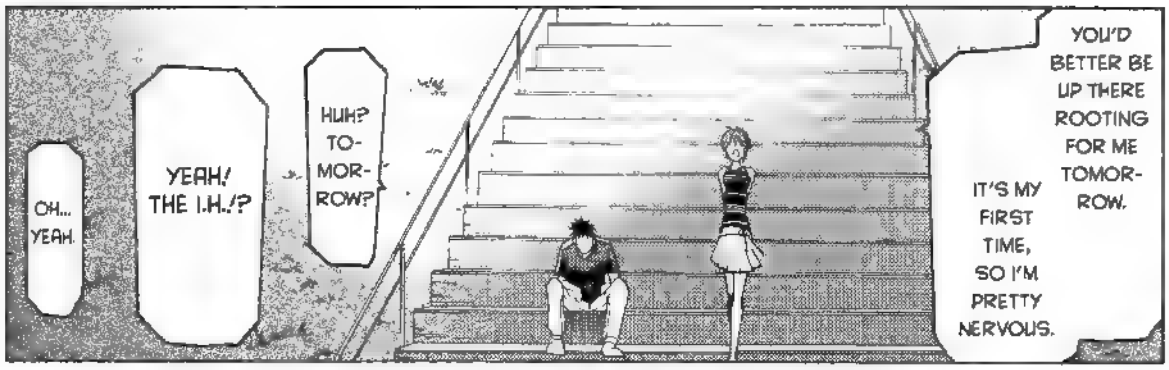


I'LL ALWAYS BE...
...RIGHT HERE BY YOUR SIDE, AKITSUKI-KUN.
HUH?
AH...
WHOOSH
AH... HONOKA-CHAN.

WHOOSH
HO-
NOKA-
CHA--
TAPPA
TAPPA
. . . . . .

WHA
THUMP
THUMP
WHY DID SHE DO THAT?
I DON'T GET IT. IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE.
BUT...
IT DEFINITELY HAPPENED.
HONOKA-CHAN AND I KI-KI-KI-
A-ASAHINA!
QUIT SPACING OUT AND SAY SOME-THING!
I SAID, HI!
SHOCK
WAH!

DID YOU FINISH PRAC-TICE?
HUH? OH, I JUST...I MEAN...
WHAT AM I SO NER-VOUS ABOUT?
IT'S NOT LIKE ASAHINA AND I ARE GOING OUT OR ANY-THING.
DON'T LET THE PRESSURE GET TO YOU.
PRESSURE? I-I DON'T FEEL ANY PRESSURE!
UH, UM...
OKAY.
WEL...
SWIP
THEN NEVER MIND.


YOU'D BETTER BE UP THERE ROOTING FOR ME TOMOR-ROW.
IT'S MY FIRST TIME, SO I'M PRETTY NERVOUS.
HUH? TO-MOR-ROW?
YEAH! THE I.H.!?
OH... YEAH.

SO...
YOU CAME OUT HERE JUST TO TELL ME THAT?

EH...
AKITSUKI'S BEEN DOWN IN THE DUMPS...
... SINCE WE GOT HERE.
THAT'S RIGHT!
GOT A PROB-LEM WITH THAT?
N-NO...
WELL, YOU'D BETTER NOT OVER-SLEEP TOMOR-ROW.
GOOD NIGHT.
AH, ASAHINA.

ALL SHE THINKS ABOU' IS 'RACK
WHA' THE HELL?
BUT...
I'M IN LOVE WITH ASAHINA.
.....
BLUSH
AND THAT HASN'T CHANGED
HOLY SHIT
NOW THA' I THINK ABOUT IT, 'HAT WAS MY FIRS' KISS

HRRMPH...
NUMBER 3011 COMES IN AT 15 METERS 34 CENTI-METERS.
YEAH!
UNGGHYUAAA!
WOO
WOO
WOW! NICE THROW, CAPTAIN KINUGASA!
AWE-SOME!
3011

I DON'T GET IT.
WHAT THE HELL DID SHE MEAN BY THAT?

...RIGHT HERE BY YOUR SIDE, AKITSUKI-KUN...
I'LL ALWAYS BE...

HUH?

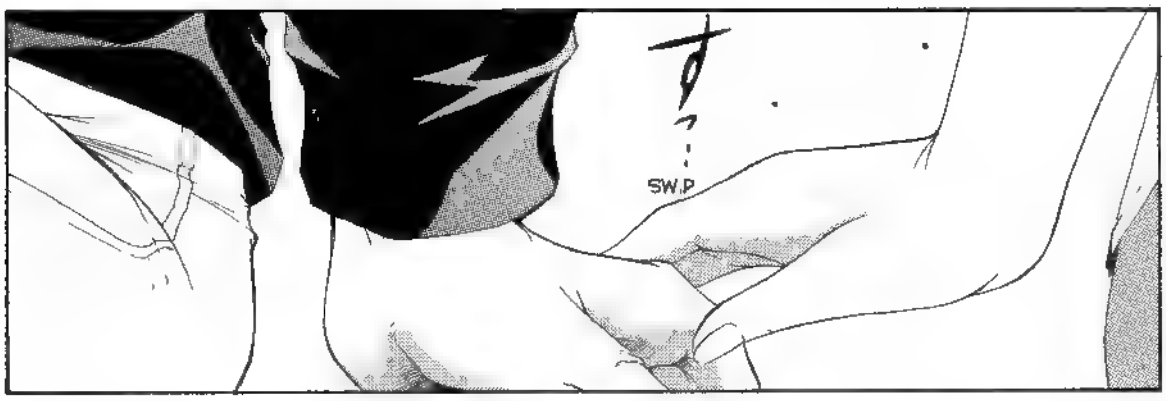
I'M SUCH AN IDIOT!
WAH! WHAT AM I DOING?

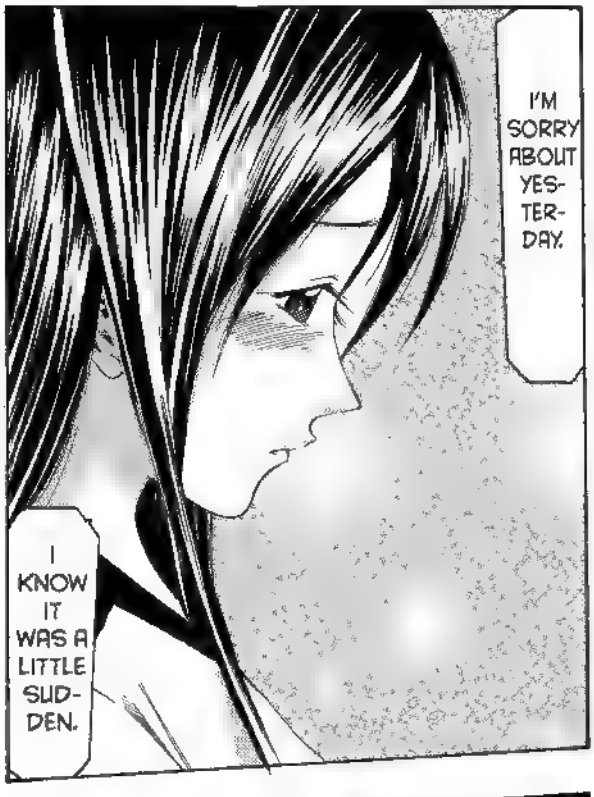
FWICK
ASAHINA IS PROBABLY TOTALLY NERVOUS!
I'VE GOTTA CHEER HER ON!

311

CAN I...
...SIT BY YOU?
AH...
HONOKA-CHAN...

.....
AH!
SURE, G-GO AHEAD.
TH-THANKS.
YESTER-DAY...
THOSE LIPS WERE...
ドキ
THUMP
ドキドキ
THUMP
ドキ
UH...
UM...


すっ…
SW.P


I'M SORRY ABOUT YES-TER-DAY.
I KNOW IT WAS A LITTLE SUD-DEN.

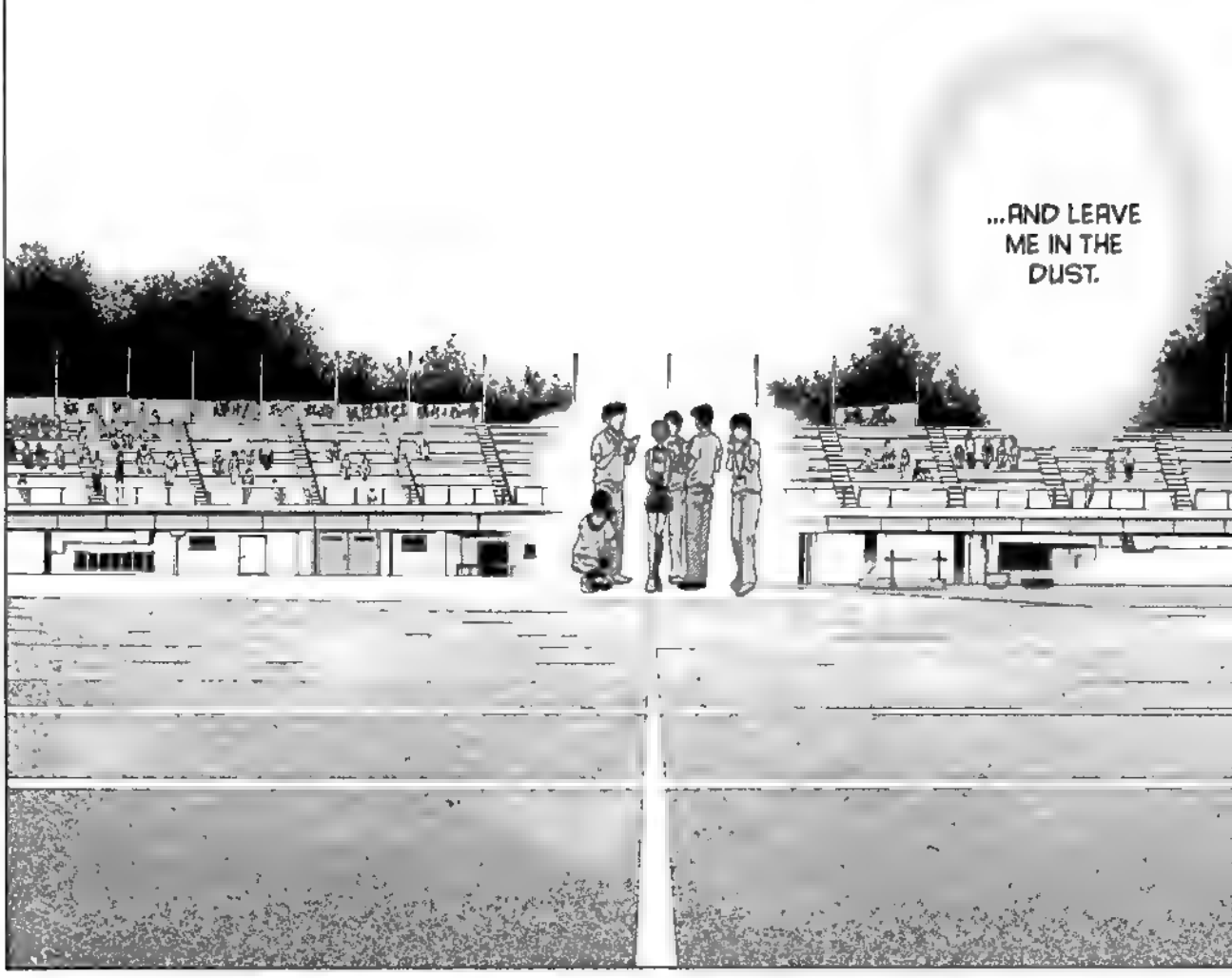
……!

THUMP
ドキ
THUMP
UH... NO...

.....
WOO
WOO
A
HUH?
ASAHINA JUST TOOK THIRD PLACE!
WH-WHAT HAP-PENED?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WHAT HAP-PENED? WEREN'T YOU WATCH-ING?
ISN'T THAT A RECORD FOR HER?
SHE CLEARED 173 CM...

WH-WHOA...
LOOK AT ALL THOSE REPORT-ERS...
CLICK
CHATTER
CHATTER
CHATTER
PRESS
311

173 CM...
THAT'S THE
CIAL
RD
HE SET
ME...
ASAHINA LOOKS SO CUTE.
THOSE REPORTERS JUST CAN'T LEAVE HER ALONE
BUT NOW... IT'S OFFICIAL.
SHE'S JUST GONNA KEEP ON GETTING BETTER AND BETTER...

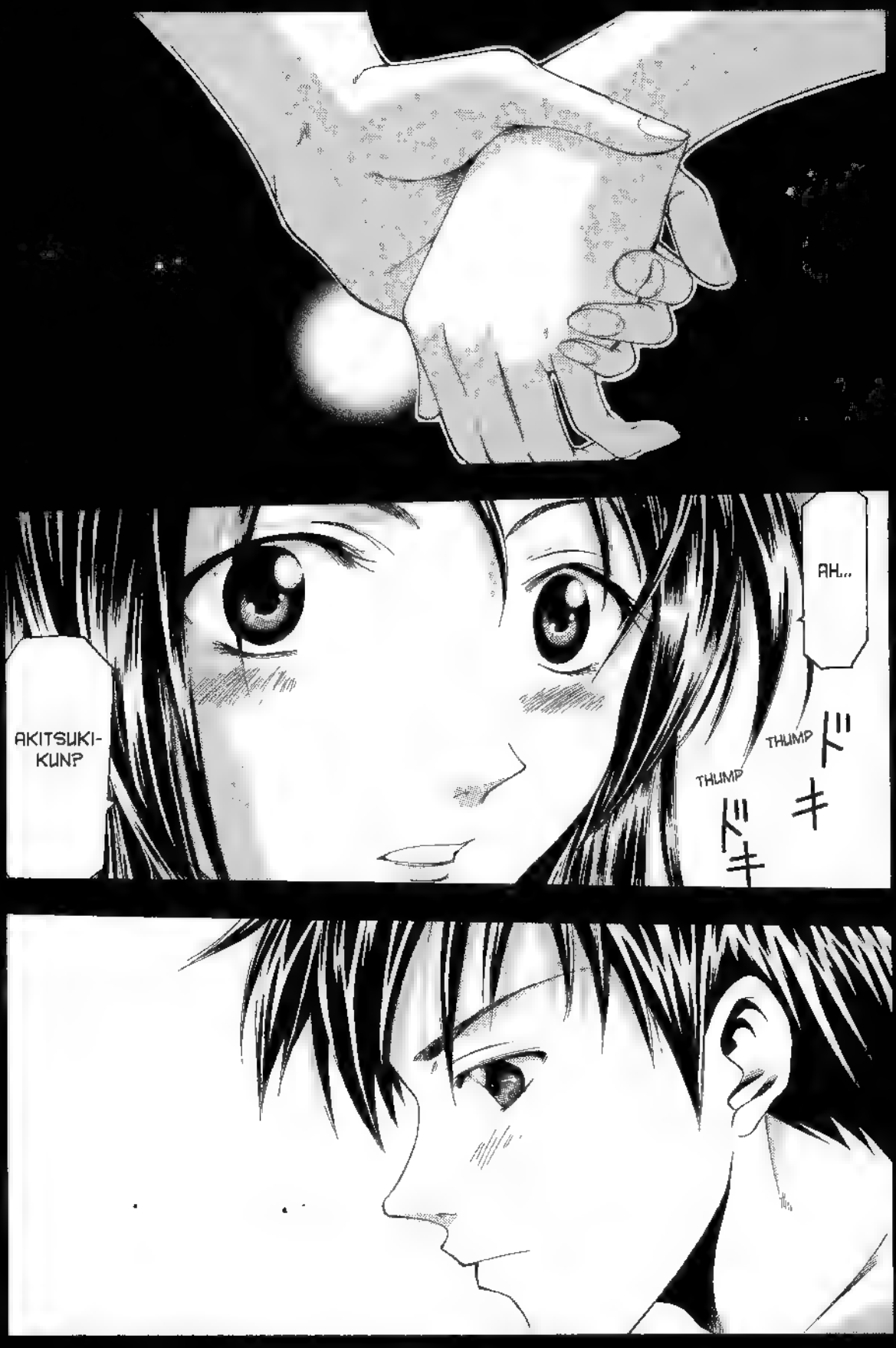

...AND LEAVE ME IN THE DUST.

...RIGHT HERE BY YOUR SIDE, AKITSUKI-KUN.
I'LL ALWAYS BE...

.....

HUH?

I GUESS I'LL JUST BE STUCK ON MY OWN...
...FOR-EVER TRYING TO CATCH UP.


AH...
THUMP
ドキ
THUMP
ドキ
AKITSUKI-KUN?

HEY, WILL YOU RECORD THAT SOCCER GAME FOR ME? THE ONE NAKATA IS PLAYING IN.
SO? HOW'S AUS-TRALIA?
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE IN AN-OTHER COUN-TRY!

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER NINETEEN

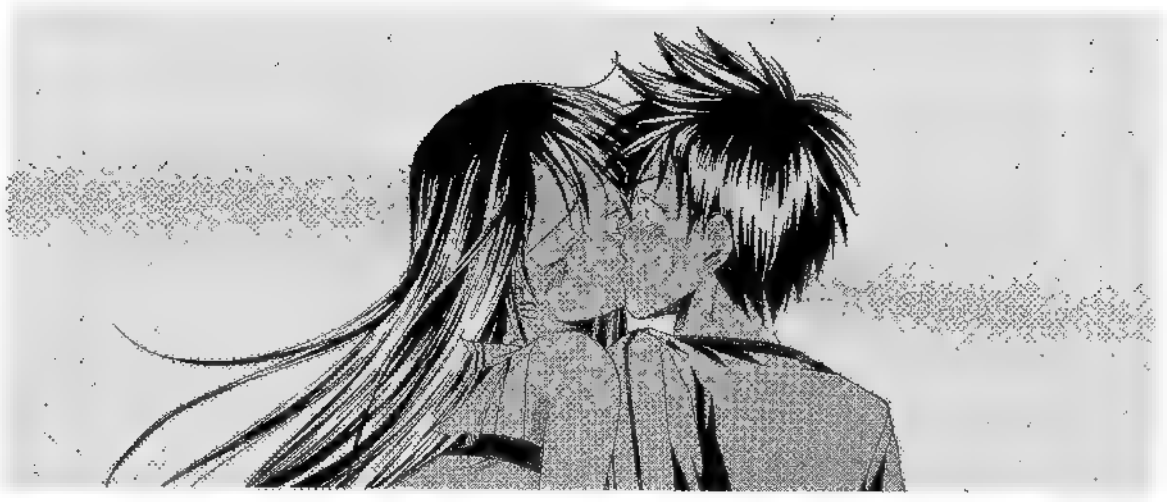
IS THAT ALL?

AHH, WHY THE HELL DO I HAVE TO HELP YOU WITH THIS?
BECAUSE YOU'RE A FRESHMAN, DUH.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
THIS SUCKS. I COULDN'T PICK UP A SINGLE CHICK, AND YAMATO WON'T EVEN TALK TO ME.
WHAT A LAME TRIP.
QUIT SPACING OUT, AND HOLD UP THE BAN-NER.

SUZUKA

#35 GOALS

HEY, SAKURAI.
YEAH?
CLINK
OKAY.
TAPPA
TAPPA
HONOKA-CHAN IS SUCH A HARD WORKER.
I'VE ALWAYS GOTTEN ALONG PRETTY WELL WITH HER...
AND SHE'S ALWAYS BEEN A GOOD FRIEND, BUT...

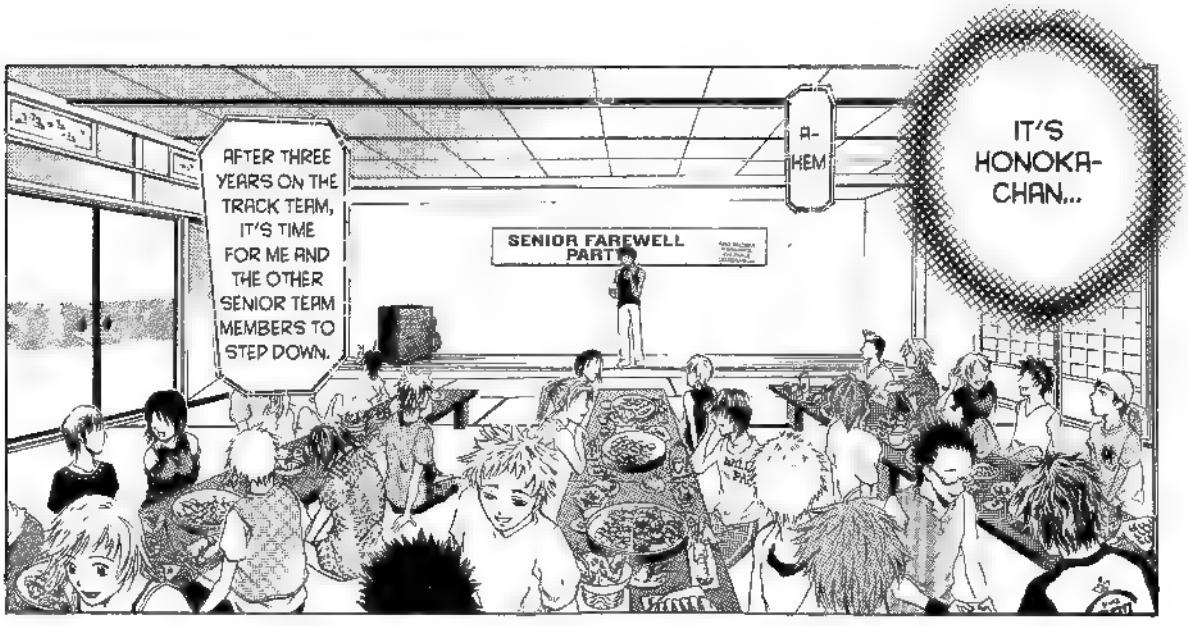


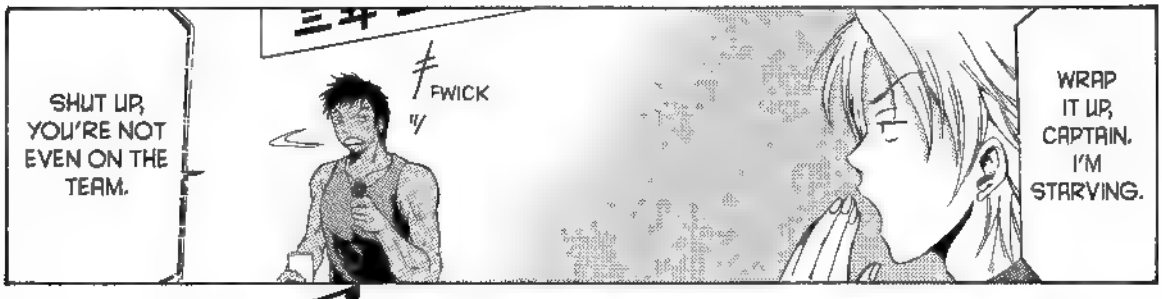
THOSE LIPS...
THEY SURE WERE SOFT...

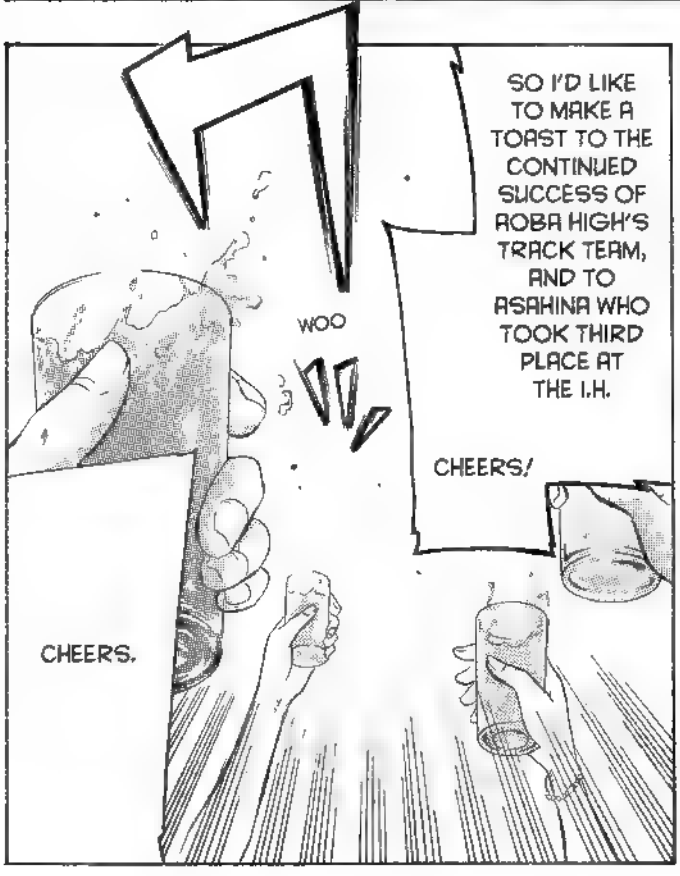
.....?
TAPPA
TAPPA
I-IT'S NOTHING!
LEAVE ME ALONE, AND GET BACK TO WORK!

!?
HEY, WHY IS YOUR FACE ALL RED?

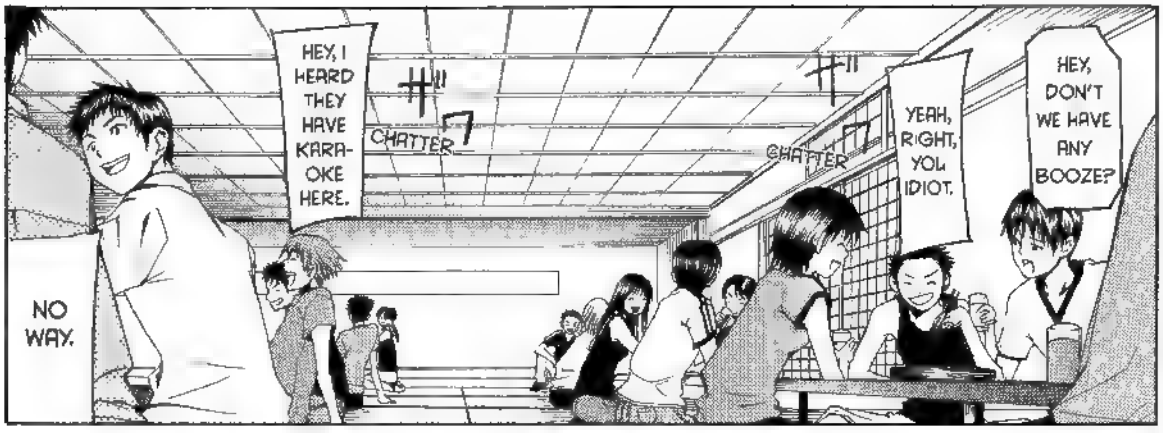
USUALLY, I CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF ASAHINA, BUT NOW...
I CAN'T STOP LOOK-ING AT HER...


AFTER THREE YEARS ON THE TRACK TEAM, IT'S TIME FOR ME AND THE OTHER SENIOR TEAM MEMBERS TO STEP DOWN.
A-HEM
SENIOR FAREWELL PARTY
IT'S HONOKA-CHAN...


SHUT UP, YOU'RE NOT EVEN ON THE TEAM.
FWICK
WRAP IT UP, CAPTAIN. I'M STARVING.


SO I'D LIKE TO MAKE A TOAST TO THE CONTINUED SUCCESS OF AOBA HIGH'S TRACK TEAM, AND TO ASAHINA WHO TOOK THIRD PLACE AT THE I.H.
WOO
CHEERS!
CHEERS.

HUH?
WE?
WHAT A JERK. WE COME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE TO SHOW OUR SUPPORT, AND THIS IS WHAT WE GET?
SHORT DISTANCE RUNNER/ SCHOLARSHIP STUDENT KENJI KOBAYASHI-KUN PLACED IN THE TOP 16 IN THE I.H. 200 METER DASH


HEY, I HEARD THEY HAVE KARAOKE HERE.
CHATTER
CHATTER
YEAH, RIGHT, YOU IDIOT.
HEY, DON'T WE HAVE ANY BOOZE?
NO WAY.

HAVE A DRINK, SUZUKA! YOU'RE THE STAR TODAY.
UH... THANKS.
YOU WERE ON TV LAST NIGHT. DID YOU KNOW THAT?
THEY WERE CALLING YOU THE NEW HEROINE OF THE HIGH JUMP.

A FAREWELL PARTY AND...
...A CELEBRATION FOR SUZUKA ASAHINA'S THIRD-PLACE VICTORY...?

I BET YOU'LL HAVE COLLEGE SCOUTS COMING AFTER YOU SOON.
MAYBE EVEN SPONSORS.

FWISH

OKITA
INN

HEY, AKITSUKI! COME HERE FOR A SEC!
WHERE'D HE GO?
HEY, HASHIBA. DID AKITSUKI LEAVE?
HUH?
HE WAS HERE A SECOND AGO.

SORRY, BUT I NEED YOU TO GO FETCH HIM FOR ME, HASHIBA. I'M GONNA GIVE HIM A PIECE OF MY MIND.
.....
OKAY.

HE'S SUCH A PAIN IN THE ASS.
GRRNCH
I'M COUNTING ON HIM TO PULL HIS WEIGHT NEXT YEAR.

WHAT HAVE I DONE?

NOW ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT IS HONOKA-CHAN.
I KEEP TALKING ABOUT HOW I'M IN LOVE WITH ASAHINA, BUT

WHY CAN'T I STOP THINKING ABOUT HONOKA-CHAN?
IS IT BECAUSE WE HELD HANDS? OR BECAUSE WE KISSED?
WHY?

HONOKA-CHAN.
YOU JUST DISAP-PEARED ALL OF A SUDDEN, AKITSUKI-KUN.
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
I WAS KIND OF WORRIED, SO I CAME OUT LOOKING FOR YOU.
.....
HONOKA-CHAN...

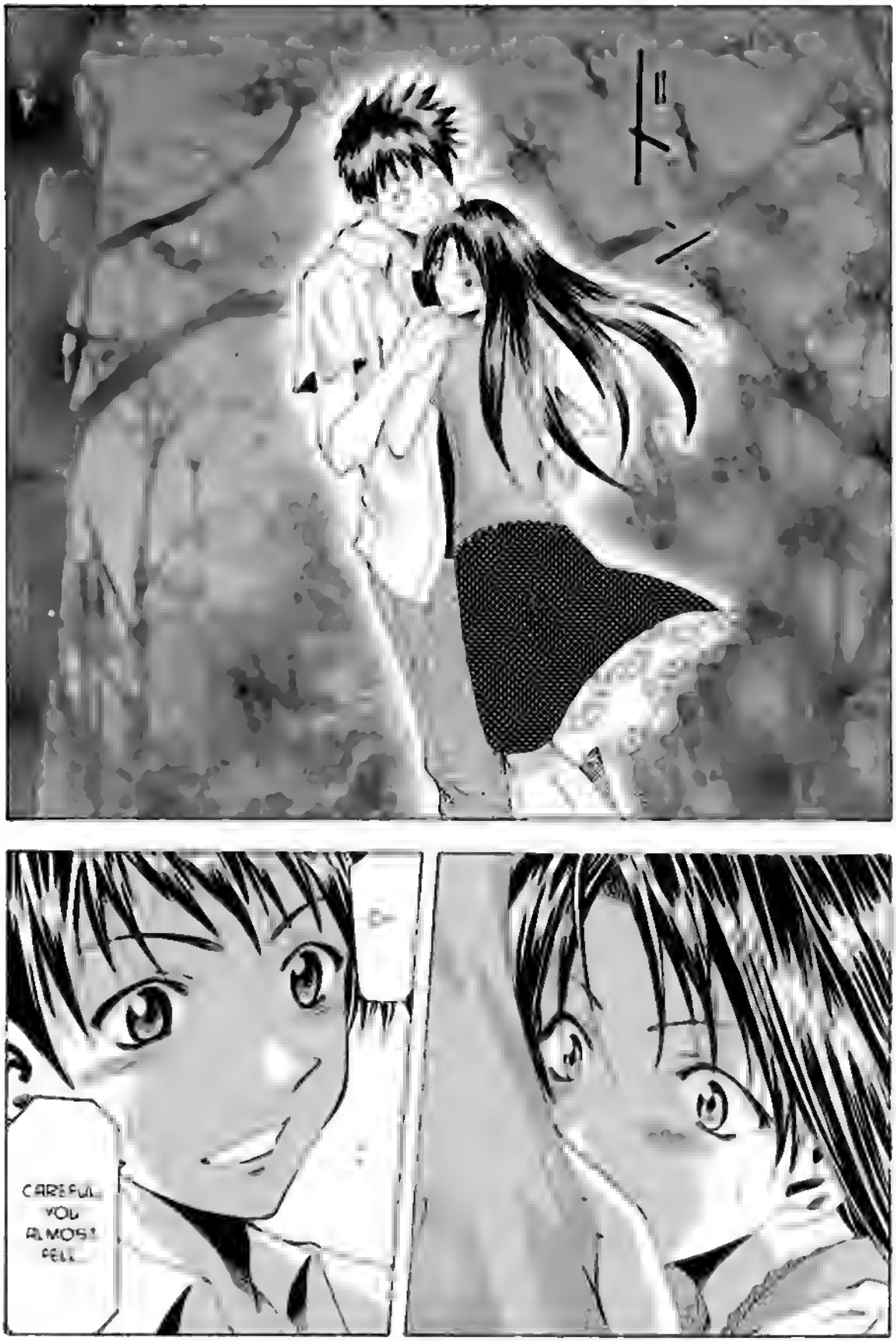
I DON'T QUITE KNOW HOW TO DESCRIBE IT, BUT...
WHAT IS THIS I'M FEELING?

I WISH HE HAD SOME BREAD RUNS
IT'S DIFFERENT FROM THE FEELING I GET WHEN I'M WITH ASAHINA

OOK, OOK!
AREN'T THEY CUTE?

BUT...
WHEN I'M WITH HONOKA-CHAN...

SPLASH
KYAA! IT'S SO COLD.
AH.
I JUST FEEL SO RELAXED...


CAREFUL YOU ALMOST FELL

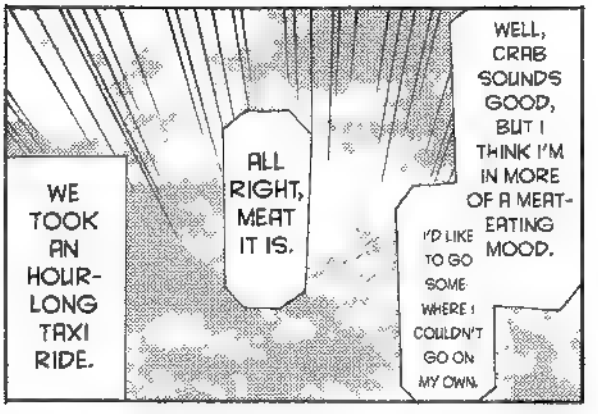
SORRY..
H-HONOKA-CHAN..
スッ..

AH
H-HOLD ON!
UH...I MEAN...
.....
.....
IT'S NOT LIKE...
...WE'RE GOING OUT OR ANY-THING.
YOU'RE RIGHT

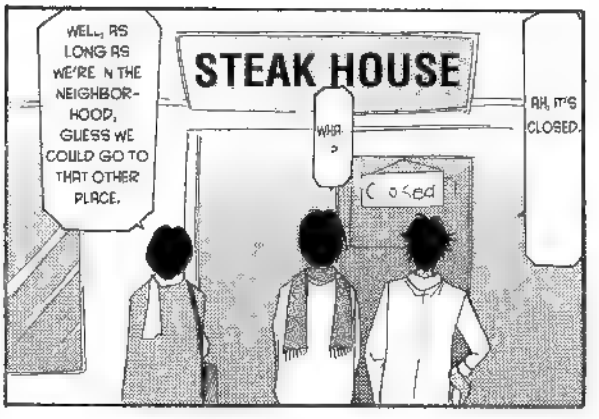
.....
I'M SORRY..
.....!
AT THAT MOMENT HONOKA-CHAN...
グイ
YANK
...SUD-DENLY SEEMED CUTER THAN EVER BEFORE.
HUH?

WHERE THE HELL DID AKI-SUKI GO?

WHAT THE HELL IS HE DOING?


WELL, CRAB SOUNDS GOOD, BUT I THINK I'M IN MORE OF A MEAT-EATING MOOD.
I'D LIKE TO GO SOMEWHERE I COULDN'T GO ON MY OWN.
ALL RIGHT, MEAT IT IS.
WE TOOK AN HOUR-LONG TAXI RIDE.

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER TWENTY
CHOICES



A RAMEN SHOP
THEIR STIR-FRIED MEAT AND VEGGIES ARE REALLY GOOD.
THE MISO STIR FRY'S GOOD, TOO.
SO MUCH FOR GOING SOME-WHERE COULDN'T USUALLY AFFORD.

UP TILL NOW, I'D NEVER EVEN THOUGHT OF HER LIKE THIS.
I ALWAYS SAW HER AS JUST A FRIEND.
NOW WHEN I SEE HER STANDING BEFORE ME
BUT...

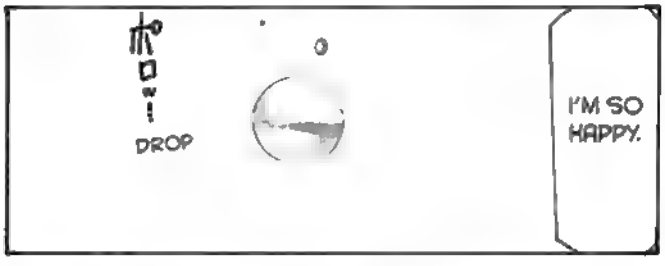
SUZUKA

#36 EXPOSED

IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE...
I MEAN..
SHOULD WE BE DOING THIS?
HUH?
.....

WELL...
WHY DON'T WE START GOING OUT?

N-NO, NOT AT ALL.
UH... WAIT...DID THAT SOUND REALLY LAME?
SORRY

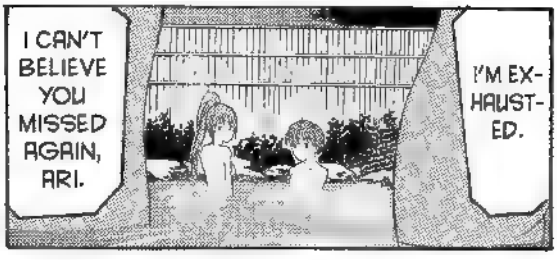

DROP
I'M SO HAPPY.

EH?

SO HAPPY...
HONOKA-CHAN...
HE FINALLY UNDERSTOOD...
WAH...
WHAT THE HECK DID I JUST WALK IN ON?

DON'T BLAME IT ON ME.
WHAT? I ONLY MISSED BECAUSE YOU WERE SPACING OUT, MAKI-CHAN.
DON'T FIGHT, YOU GUYS.
THAT'S RIGHT.

SHOULD I TELL SUZUKA?
WHAT SHOULD DO?


I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU MISSED AGAIN, ARI.
I'M EXHAUSTED.

THEY CAME TO CHEER ON THE R BASKETBALL TEAM AT THE I.H.
THEY'RE CHEERLEADERS FROM SAINT SOMETHING OR OTHER HIGH SCHOOL.
WOW... THOSE GIRLS HAVE SUCH NICE BODIES.

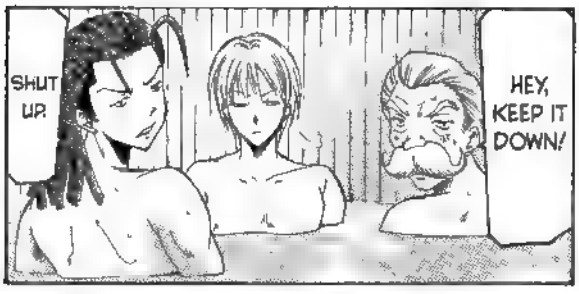
WHOA, COOL! AN OUTSIDE BATH!

HMM...
THERE'S SOMETHING SHOULD—

YAMATO-KUN?

THIS S AWESOME, YASUNOBU! IT'S HUGE!
SPLASH
SPLASH
WHAT'RE YOU SEVEN?

SPLASH
WOO!


HEY, KEEP IT DOWN!
SHUT UP.

SOUNDS LIKE HE'S DOING BETTER.
HUH?

S- SORRY...
OW! MY BUTT HIT BOTTOM!
.....

CAN'T HE JUST TAKE A NICE, QUIET BATH THOUGH?
GEEZ...
FWAH

カポーン
AHH! GOD DAMN IT!
SOSH
MAYBE I SHOULDN'T TELL HER AFTER ALL.
THEN AGAIN...

YAWN
HUH?
IT'S PRETTY QUIET THIS MORNING, EH?
OKITA INN
WE DON'T HAVE PRACTICE TILL THE AFTERNOON.
YEAH...THAT'S CAUSE ALL THE SENIORS ARE GOING BACK TO TOKYO.
OH YEAH?
BESIDES, I CAN'T GO HOME WITHOUT PICKING UP AT LEAST ONE CHICK.
WHAT'RE YOU STILL DOING HERE ANYWAY?
THE I.H. IS OVER.
JUST KILLING TIME.
HEY, YAMATO-KUN.

WANNA COME SHOPPING WITH ME? ...IF YOU'RE NOT DOING ANYTHING...
I WANNA BUY SOME SOUVE-NIRS.

NO?

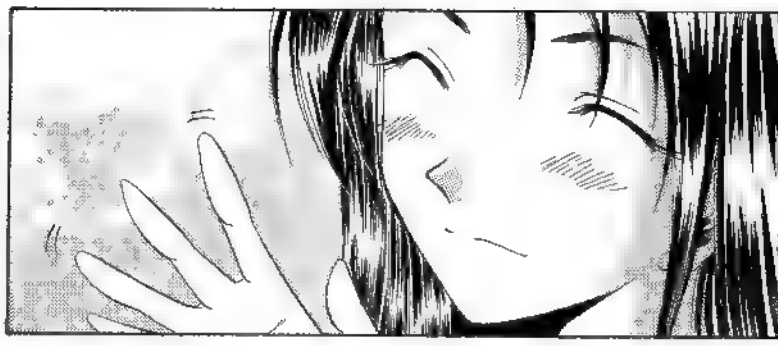
HUH?
YOU SHOULD GO, DUDE. YOU'VE GOT NOTHING BETTER TO DO.

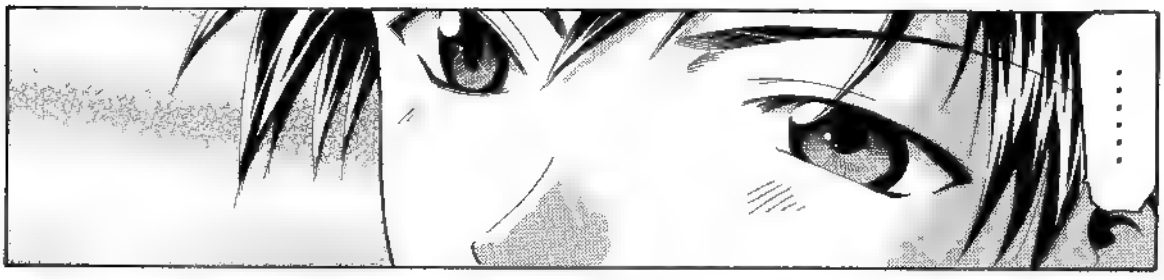
.....

WHAT?
SORRY, BUT...
I'M KIND OF TIRED.
FINE! FORGET IT. I'LL JUST GO WITH MIKI!
AH... SUZUKA-CHAN.
WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM? JUST COME FOR A LITTLE WHILE.
NO.

NOTH-
ING...
FORGET
IT.
WHAT
DO
YOU
MEAN?
WH-
WHAT'S
WITH YOU,
DUDE?
FWIP

CLOP CLOP
TAPPA
TAPPA

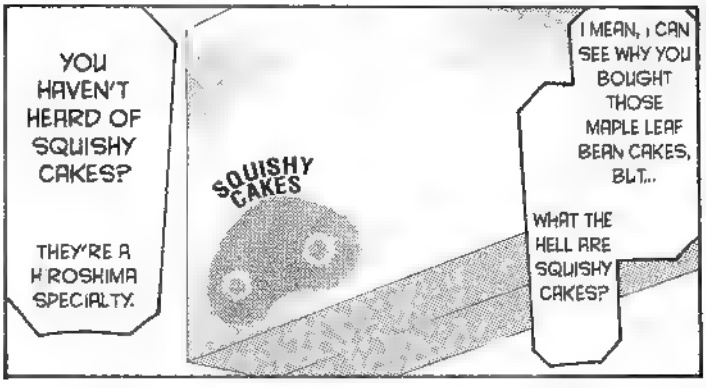


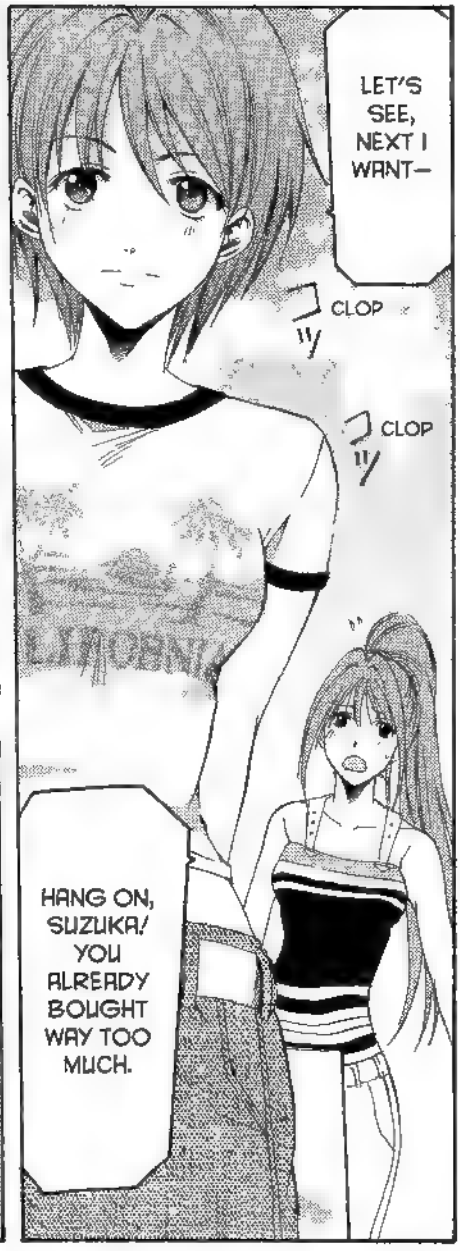

.....

HUH?
N-NO, NOTHING IN PAR-TICULAR.

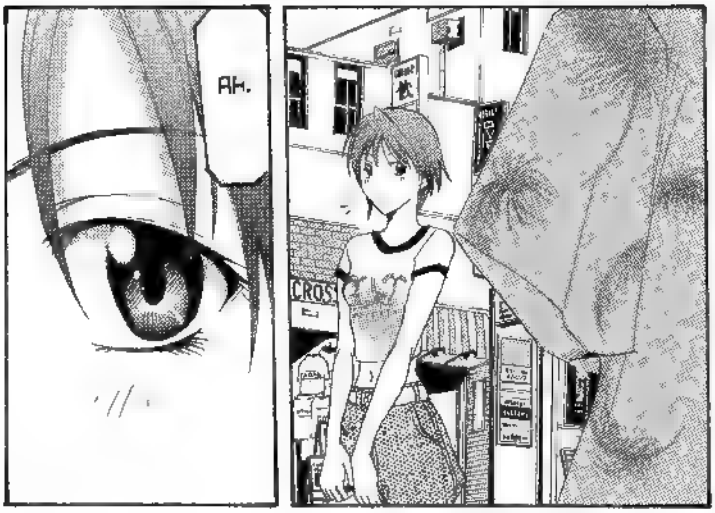
SOME-THING...
...GOOD HAPPEN TO YOU OR WHAT?

WHAT-EVER...


YOU HAVEN'T HEARD OF SQUISHY CAKES?
THEY'RE A HIROSHIMA SPECIALTY.
SQUISHY CAKES
I MEAN, I CAN SEE WHY YOU BOUGHT THOSE MAPLE LEAF BEAN CAKES, BUT...
WHAT THE HELL ARE SQUISHY CAKES?

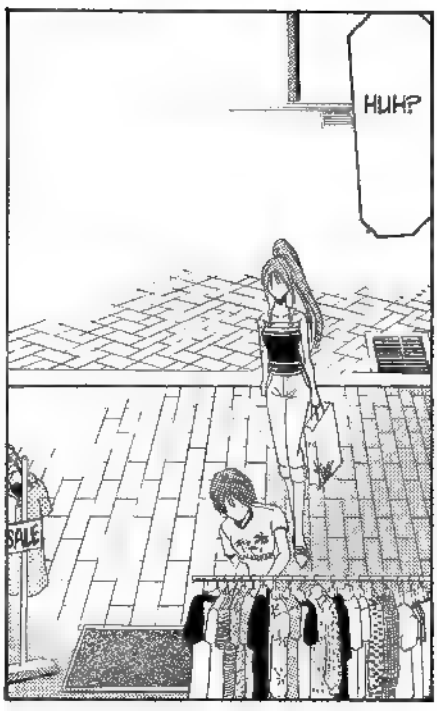

LET'S SEE, NEXT I WANT—
CLOP
CLOP
HANG ON, SUZUKA! YOU ALREADY BOUGHT WAY TOO MUCH.

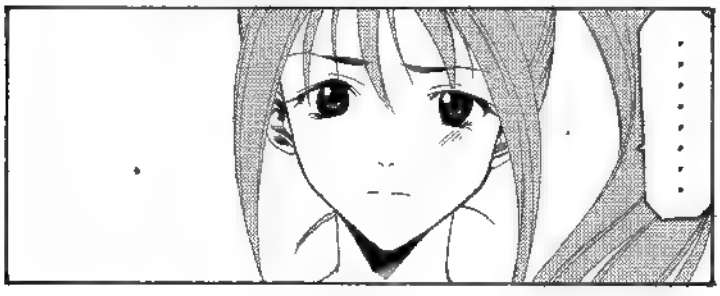
I DON'T THINK I CAN KEEP UP WITH YOU.
GOD...


AH.

DON'T YOU THINK THIS SHIRT...
...WOULD LOOK GOOD ON YAMATO-KUN?

AND YAMATO-KUN HAS PRETTY WIDE SHOUL-DERS.
OH, BUT IT'S A ME-DIUM.


HUH?
SALE


.....

HEY, SUZUKA...
OH... I'M NOT GONNA BUY IT OR ANY-THING.
HE WOULDN'T EVEN COME SHOPPING WITH ME.
THAT'S NOT...
...WHAT I'M SAYING.
.....
WHAT IS IT?
.....
.....?
AKITSUKI...

...IS GOING OUT WITH SAKURAI-SAN.
...EH?

...I SAW IT HAPPEN.
I OVER-HEARD THEM YESTER-DAY...
カラオケ
HYUU
...OH.

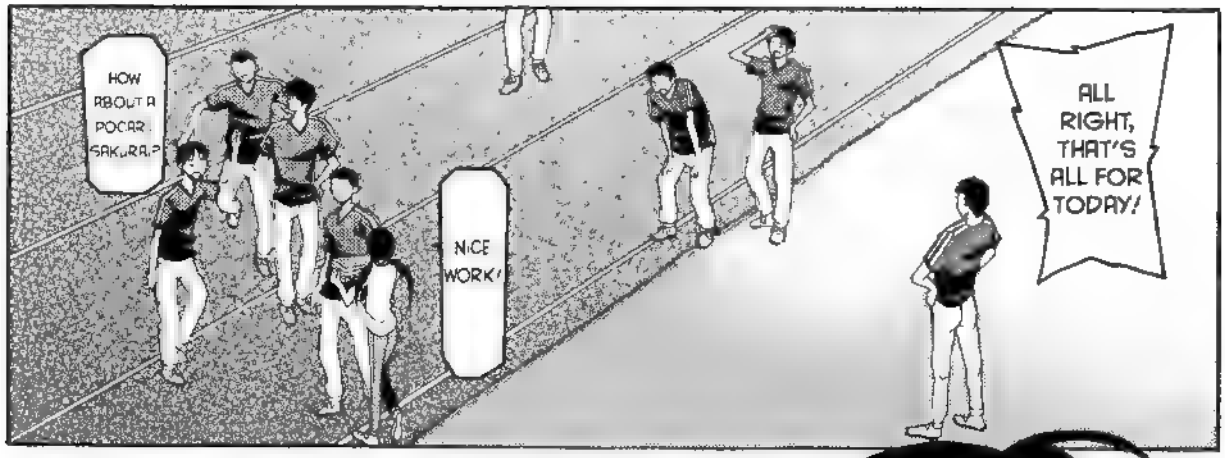
SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER TWENTY-ONE MOTHER

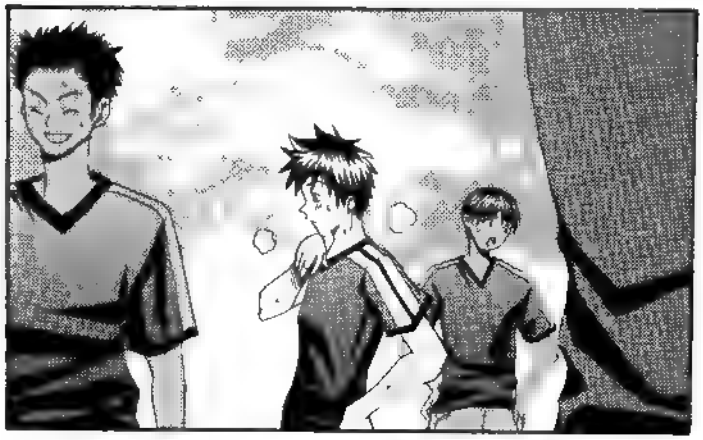
WHEN-EVER MY MOM CALLS...
HELLO? IT'S MOM.
OH, I'M KIND OF BUSY RIGHT NOW. CAN I CALL YOU BACK LATER?
OH, SORRY, I'LL HANG UP.
OKAY, BYE.
OH, THAT'S RIGHT...DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH RICE? OUR NEW CROP JUST CAME IN. SHOULD I SEND YOU SOME?
NO, I'M OKAY.
OH, AND YOUR FATHER WENT ON A LITTLE TRIP YESTER-DAY.
.....
THE REAL CONVER-SAT ON BEGINS AFTER SHE SAYS SHE'S GONNA HANG UP.
GRIP

TAPPA
TAPPA
TAPPA
TAPPA
HUH?
WHY THE HELL IS HE STILL HERE, MIYAMOTO-SENPAI?
LET'S PICK UP THE PACE!
HE SAID HE'S GONNA STICK AROUND AND CONCEN-TRATE ON TRAINING THE KOHA UNTIL GRADUATION DAY
LUCKY FOR US.
QUIT SLACK-ING!
Y-YES, SIR!
SIGH.
LUCKY MY ASS.
ONE MORE LAP!

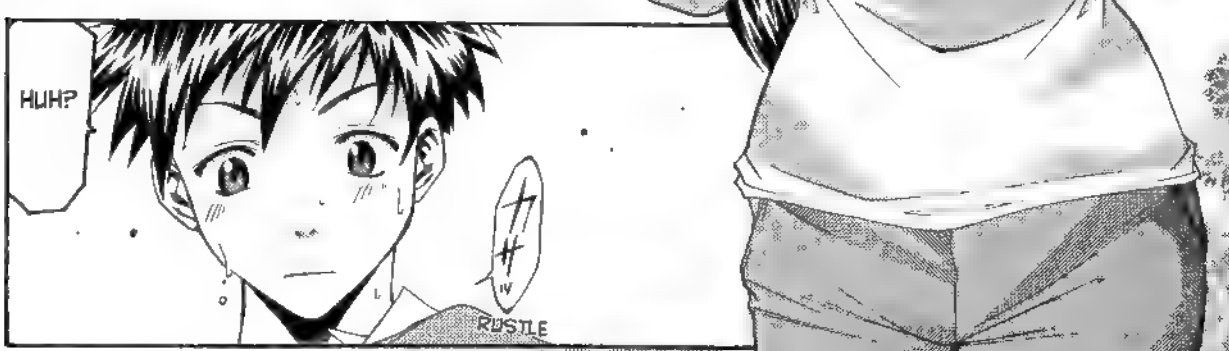
#37 CELEBRATION

SUZUKA

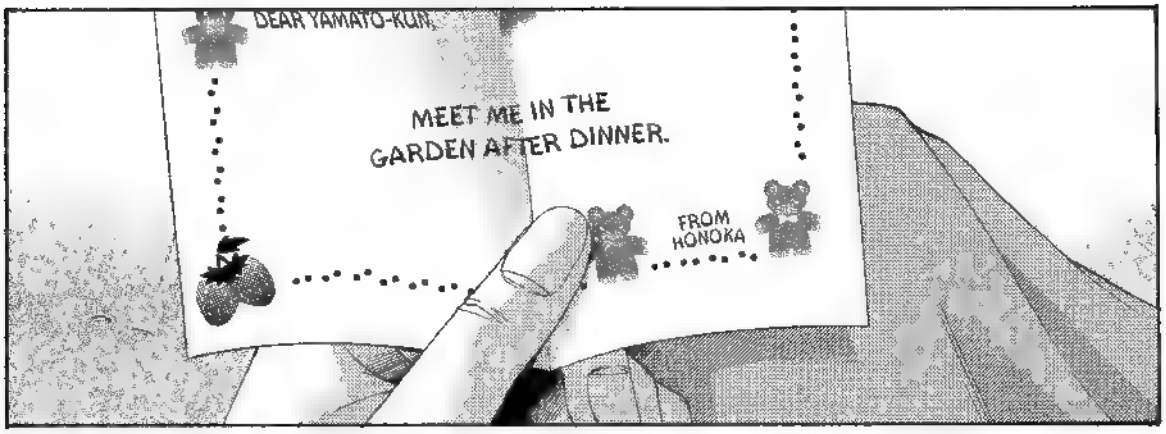

HOW ABOUT A POCARI SAKURA?
NICE WORK!
ALL RIGHT, THAT'S ALL FOR TODAY!



AHH, THANKS.
FWICK
NICE WORK, AKITSUK-KUN.
HERE'S YOUR TOWEL?

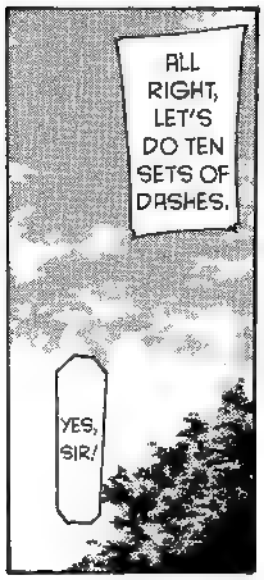

HUH?
RUSTLE

キョロ
YOINK
キョロ
YOINK


DEAR YAMATO-KUN,
MEET ME IN THE GARDEN AFTER DINNER.
FROM HONOKA

HUH? NOTHING.
WHAT'S WRONG, AKITSUKI?
RUSTLE

SAKURAI-SAN!
YES!


ALL RIGHT, LET'S DO TEN SETS OF DASHES.
YES, SIR!

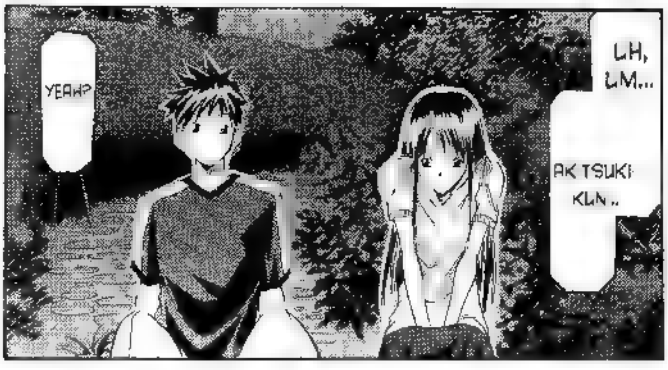
.....

OKITA INN
HEY, MIYAMOTO-SENPAI. THERE'S NONE LEFT FOR ME.
THAT WAS GOOD.
WHAT? THERE SHOULD BE ENOUGH FOR EVERY-ONE.
ガチャ
CLINK
SPLASH
I'M SORRY, AKITSUKI-KUN. I SHOULDN'T HAVE CALLED YOU OUT HERE. YOU MUST BE TIRED AFTER THAT LONG PRACTICE.
NO.
I'M FINE.
I'M PRETTY USED TO IT NOW.
RE-ALLY?
YEAH

I JUST...
...REALLY WANTED TO BE ALONE WITH YOU.

...HONOKA-CHAN.

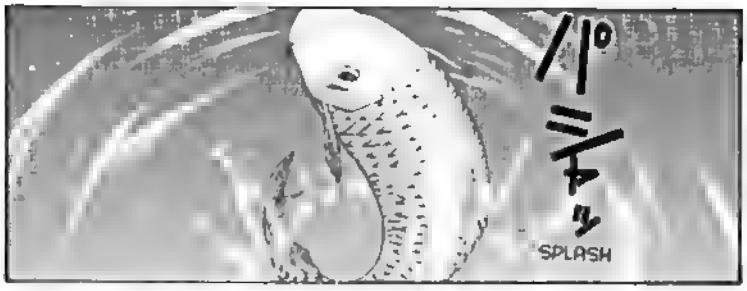
AH...
THE MOON LOOKS SO PRETTY.
Y-YEAH


UH, UM...
AKITSUKI KUN..
YEAH?

EVER SINCE...
...THE FIRST TIME I MET YOU AT THE SHRINE...
...I'VE HAD MY EYE ON YOU. EVERY YEAR SINCE THEN, I WATCHED YOU WHENEVER YOU CAME TO THE SHRINE.
SINCE WE'RE GOING OUT NOW...
I'M...
...JUST GONNA COME RIGHT OUT AND SAY IT.
THAT'S WHY I WAS SO SHOCKED WHEN I FOUND OUT THAT YOU WERE TAKING OUR HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANCE EXAM.
I WAS LIKE... I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S HERE!
HUH?
I ALWAYS WISHED THAT SOMEDAY, I'D GET TO BE ALONE WITH YOU LIKE THIS.

AND I WAS SO HAPPY WHEN I FOUND OUT THAT WE WERE IN THE SAME CLASS.
THAT'S WHY I TRIED TO TALK TO YOU THAT FIRST DAY

YOU MUST'VE THOUGHT I WAS REALLY WEIRD.
WELL... MAYBE A LITTLE.


SPLASH

RIP
BUT I DON'T THINK THAT NOW!

REALLY?
THE ONLY REASON I JOINED THE TRACK TEAM WAS BECAUSE YOU WERE ON IT, AKITSUKI-KUN.

B-BE—
YEAH, I JUST WANTED
I LOVE YOU..
.....

HONOKA-CHAN.
I HOPE THIS LASTS FOREVER.

I DO, TOO.
.....

YEAH
WE SHOULD GO BACK
IT'S COOLING OFF, AND I DON'T WANT YOU TO CATCH COLD, AKITSUKI-KUN.

I'M SO HAPPY.

I HOPE THIS LASTS...

ARE YOU SAYING I'VE OVERSTAYED MY WELCOME?
...FOREVER.
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
HUH?
YAMATO SHOULDN'T BE THE ONLY ONE WHO GETS TO HAVE FUN. I'M GONNA FIND ME A GIRL, TOO.
A HOTTIE.
GOOD MORNING.
WELL, NO, BUT...
I MEAN, YOU'RE NOT EVEN ON THE TRACK TEAM.
SO WHAT?
カッ
SCHTICK
SEEMS LIKE HE AND SAKURAI ARE GETTING ALONG PRETTY WELL.
HOW LONG DO YOU THINK I'VE KNOWN THE GUY?
Y-YOU MEAN, YOU KNOW?

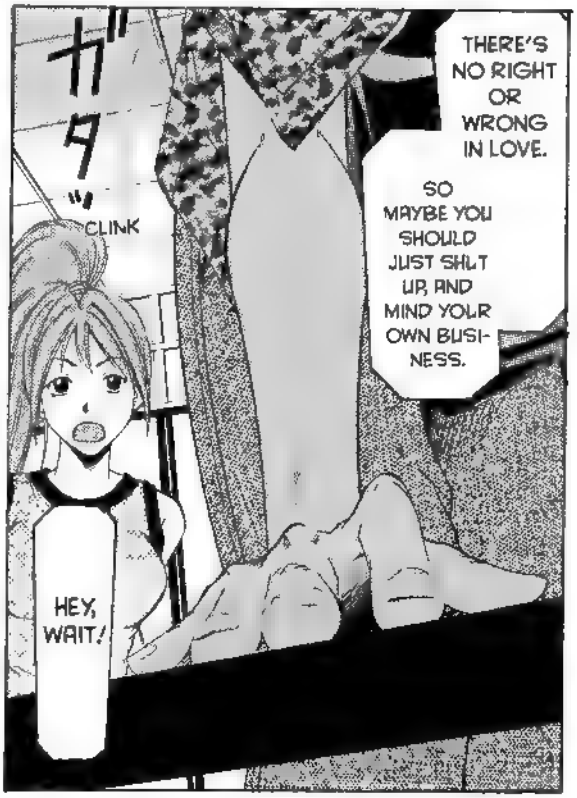
I MEAN, IT'S TOTALLY FUCKED UP!
ALL THIS TIME HE'S BEEN SAYING HE'S IN LOVE WITH SUZUKA, AND THEN SUDDENLY HE JUST CHANGES HIS MIND.
THEN WHY DIDN'T YOU STOP HIM?
HUH?
PEOPLE CHANGE THEIR MINDS ALL THE TIME.
SO WHAT?
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S WRONG?
IT IS/ IT'S TOTALLY WRONG.
DON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT/
I MEAN, YOU FELL IN LOVE WITH YAMATO JUST BECAUSE HE WAS FAST.
HUH?
SAKURAI'S BEEN IN LOVE WITH YAMATO FOR A LONG TIME.

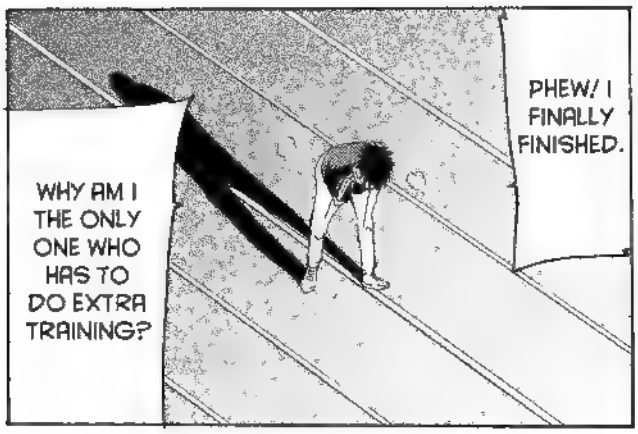
I'D SAY THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOU...
...TRYING TO BREAK THEM UP.

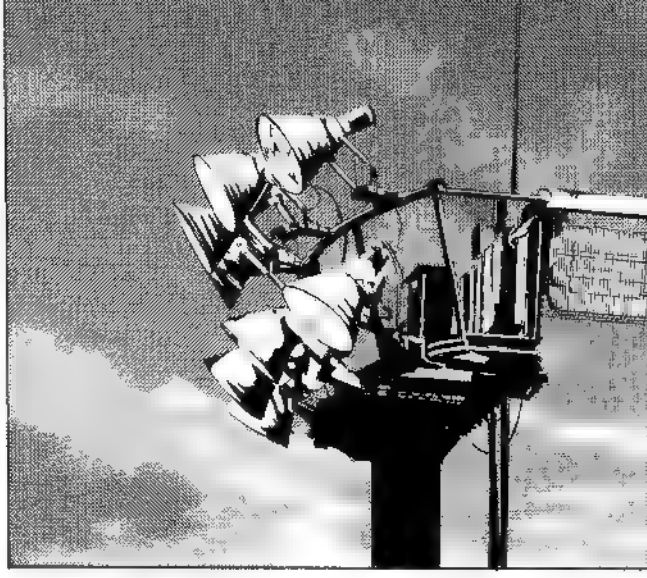
I—
I'M NOT—

GOD, I LOVE THE TRACK TEAM.
I'M NOT EVEN A MEMBER, AND YET THEY FEED ME!
I'M SERIOUS, SENPAI. THERE'S NOT ENOUGH FOR ME.
THAT'S WEIRD
GRUMBLE

.....


THERE'S NO RIGHT OR WRONG IN LOVE.
SO MAYBE YOU SHOULD JUST SHUT UP, AND MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS.
ガタ
CLINK
HEY, WAIT!


PHEW! I FINALLY FINISHED.
WHY AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS TO DO EXTRA TRAINING?



I'LL JUST STRETCH A LITTLE, AND HEAD BACK.
THE CAPTAIN'S ALWAYS PICKING ON ME.

AH... ASAHINA...

HEY!

OH YEAH
YOUR FORM IS ALL OFF AGAIN
YOU'LL NEVER BREAK A RECORD WITH FORM LIKE THAT!
GET YOUR SHIT TOGETHER
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT?
HEY!
OKAY. HEARD YOU THE FIRST TIME
NOW WHAT?

ARE YOU REALLY GOING OUT WITH
MIZUKI-CHAN?
HUH?
AH, SO

YEAH
WE'RE GOING OUT
OH
YEP

I NEVER THOUGHT YOU'D FIND A GIRLFRIEND YAMATO-KUN.

I WAS PRETTY SURPRISED

EVEN THOUGH SHE KNEW, SHE STILL ACTED LIKE THE SAME OLD ASAHINA
SHE WAS HER USUAL SELF

FIVE YEARS AGO.
I'M GONNA WORK MY ASS OFF SO THAT SOMEDAY, MTA-SAN WILL BE MY CHIEF EDITOR.
I WAS FULL OF PASSION AFTER GETTING MY FIRST SERIES.
THAT'S MY GOAL.

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER TWENTY-TWO GOALS

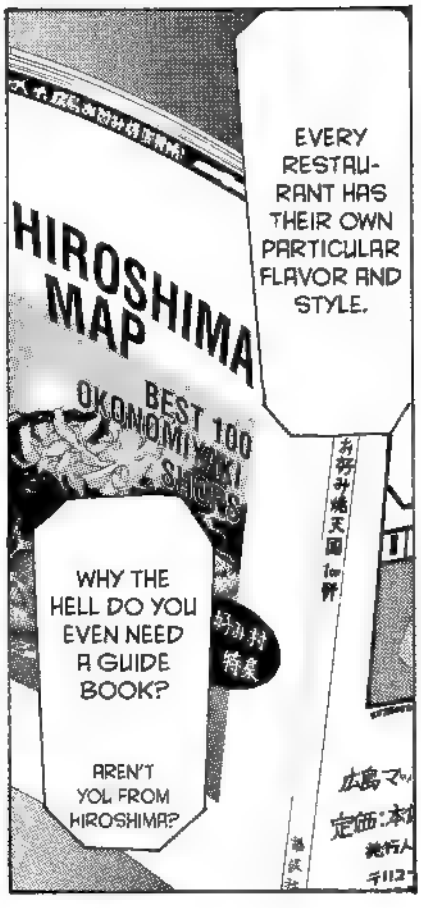
SUZUKA

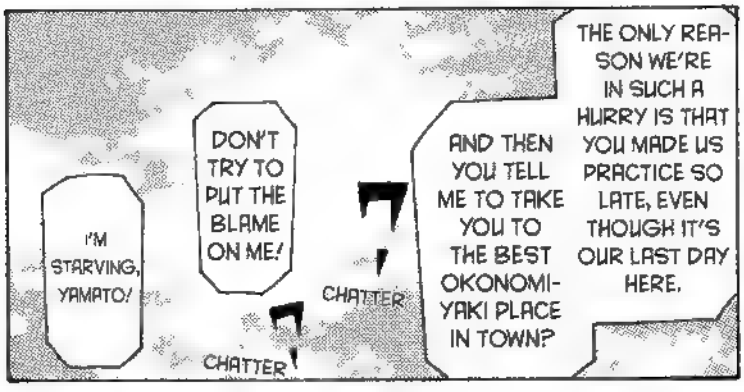
#38 LIGHTNING

I-I'LL FIND IT!
HAVE WE BEEN GOING AROUND IN CIRCLES?
HEY, AKITSUKI! WHERE'S THIS GREAT OKONOMIYAKI PLACE YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT?

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT OKONOMIYAKI?
JUST PICK ANOTHER PLACE.
I'M SURE THEY'RE ALL THE SAME ANYWAY.

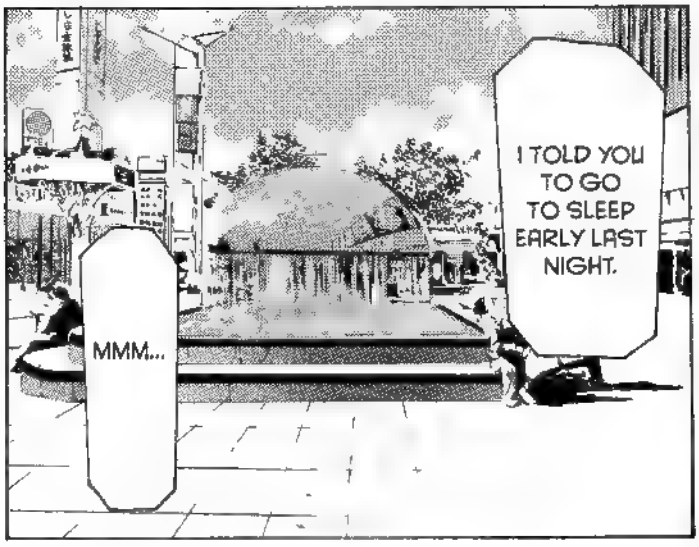
.....
DON'T LISTEN TO THEM, AKITSUKI-KUN. JUST TAKE YOUR TIME.
HIROSHIMA MAP


HIROSHIMA MAP
BEST 100 OKONOMIYAKI
EVERY RESTAURANT HAS THEIR OWN PARTICULAR FLAVOR AND STYLE.
WHY THE HELL DO YOU EVEN NEED A GUIDE BOOK?
AREN'T YOU FROM HIROSHIMA?


I'M STARVING, YAMATO!
DON'T TRY TO PUT THE BLAME ON ME!
CHATTER
CHATTER
AND THEN YOU TELL ME TO TAKE YOU TO THE BEST OKONOMIYAKI PLACE IN TOWN?
THE ONLY REASON WE'RE IN SUCH A HURRY IS THAT YOU MADE US PRACTICE SO LATE, EVEN THOUGH IT'S OUR LAST DAY HERE.

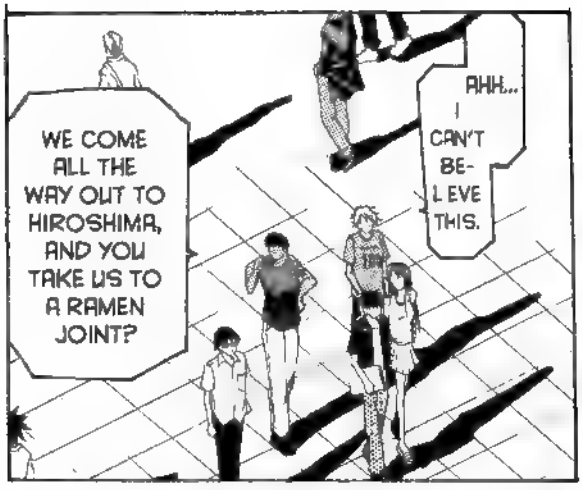
す――!
ZZZ
す――!

HEY, SUZUKA. WAKE UP!
I'M STARVING.


I TOLD YOU TO GO TO SLEEP EARLY LAST NIGHT.
MMM...

MMM...
BONK
コテ

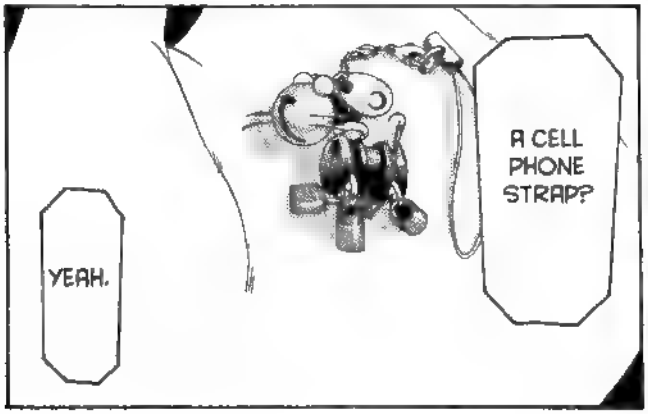
I WANNA EAT SOME...
...OKO-NOMI-YAKI.


WE COME ALL THE WAY OUT TO HIROSHIMA, AND YOU TAKE US TO A RAMEN JOINT?
AHH... I CAN'T BE- L EVE THIS.

SER - OUSLY.
THHP
THHP
THAT'S CAUSE YOU SPENT TOO MUCH TIME SCREW NG AROUND
WH-WHAT WAS I SUPPOSED TO DO? ALL OF THE OKONOMIYAKI PLACES WERE TOO PACKED. THERE WAS NO WAY WE COULD GET IN.

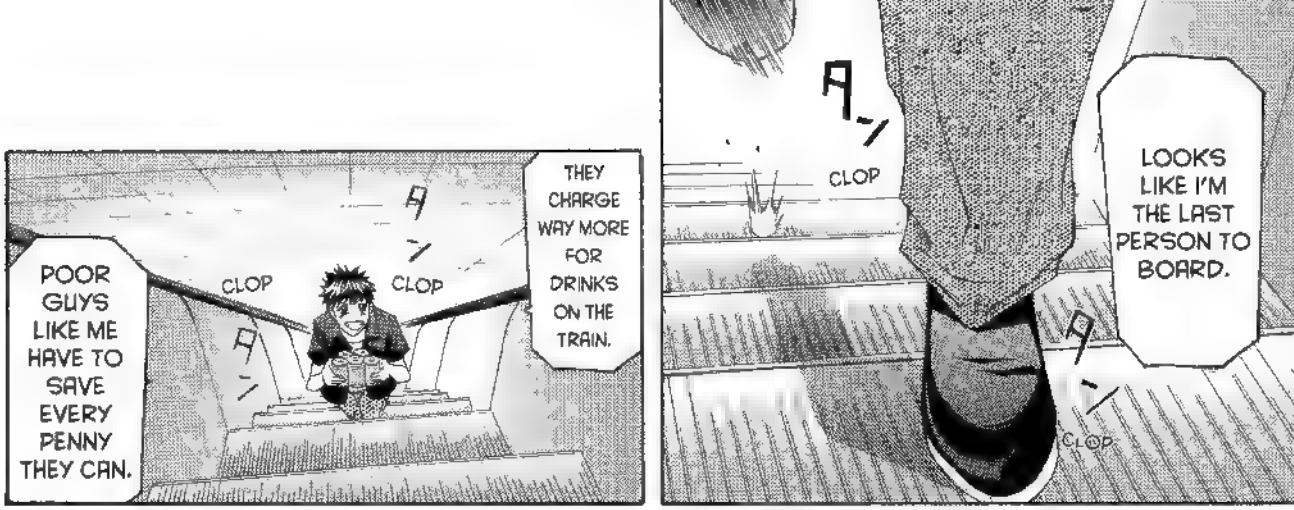
HUH?
OH YEAH...I BOUGHT THIS FOR YOU.
HERE!

THANKS.
I THOUGHT THAT PLACE WAS REALLY GOOD, AKITSUKI-KUN.

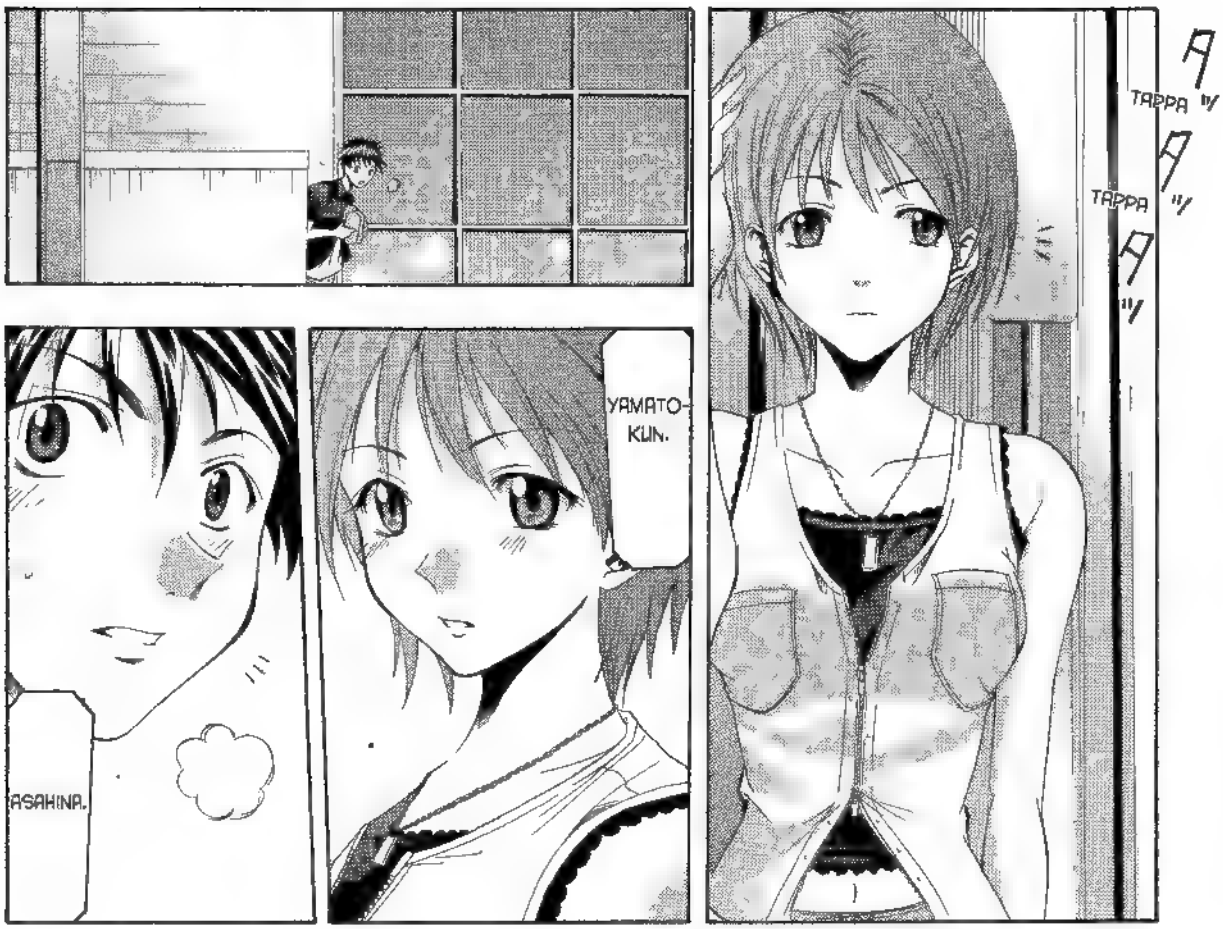

A CELL PHONE STRAP?
YEAH.

LOOK.
I'VE GOT THE SAME ONE.
THANKS.
O-OH YEAH.
...AND YOU HAVE TO GO AND RUB IT IN.
...SHIT. I STRIKE OUT TRYING TO PICK UP CHICKS...
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TWO DOING?
?
N-NOTH-ING.
AH... COMING!
HEY, HASHIBA! ASAHINA! THE BULLET TRAIN IS HERE!

LAST TRAIN
9
7:35
TOKYO
OUT OF SERVICE
711
MMM...
COME ON, SUZUKA. LET'S GO.
WHERE'RE YOU GOING, SUZUKA?
CLACK
TO THE BATH-ROOM.
IS EVERY-BODY HERE? DID ANYBODY MISS THE TRAIN?
I'M HERE!
I'M SO TIRED
WE'RE FINALLY HEAD-ING HOME.
HE'S ALWAYS WANDER-ING OFF ON HIS OWN.
HE SAID HE WAS GOING TO GO BUY A SODA, SO I GUESS HE'S OUT ON THE PLATFORM.
SQUEAK
HUH? WHERE'S AKITSUKI?


CLOP
LOOKS LIKE I'M THE LAST PERSON TO BOARD.
CLOP
CLOP
THEY CHARGE WAY MORE FOR DRINKS ON THE TRAIN.
POOR GUYS LIKE ME HAVE TO SAVE EVERY PENNY THEY CAN.

I'M SUCH A GREAT GUY!
IT SURE WAS NICE OF ME TO BUY ENOUGH FOR EVERY-BODY.

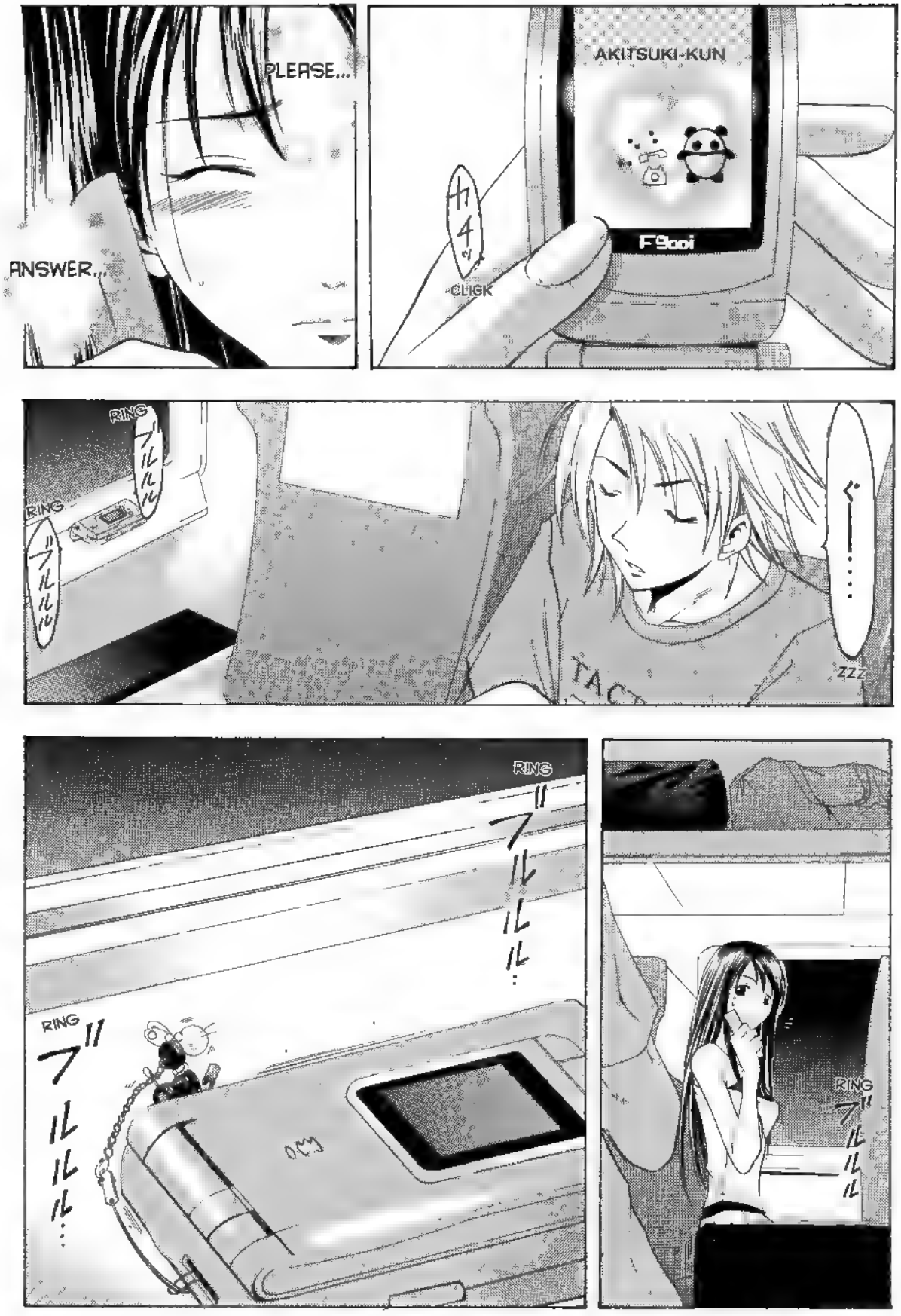

TAPPA
TAPPA
YAMATO-KUN.
ASAHINA.

!
PLUNK
PLUNK
PLUNK
WHA-?
AH...
PLUP
OH SHIT!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?
HURRY!
IF WE MISS IT, WE WON'T BE ABLE TO GET BACK...
HURRY UP! THE TRAIN IS ABOUT TO LEAVE!
WHOOSH
S-SOR-RY!
BEEP
BEEP
HIROSHI

プシュー
ガー
THEY DIDN'T GET ON!

CLACK
CLICK
WAIT FOR US!
I SAID STOP!
STOP THE TRAIN!
OH...
SHIT...
BOOP

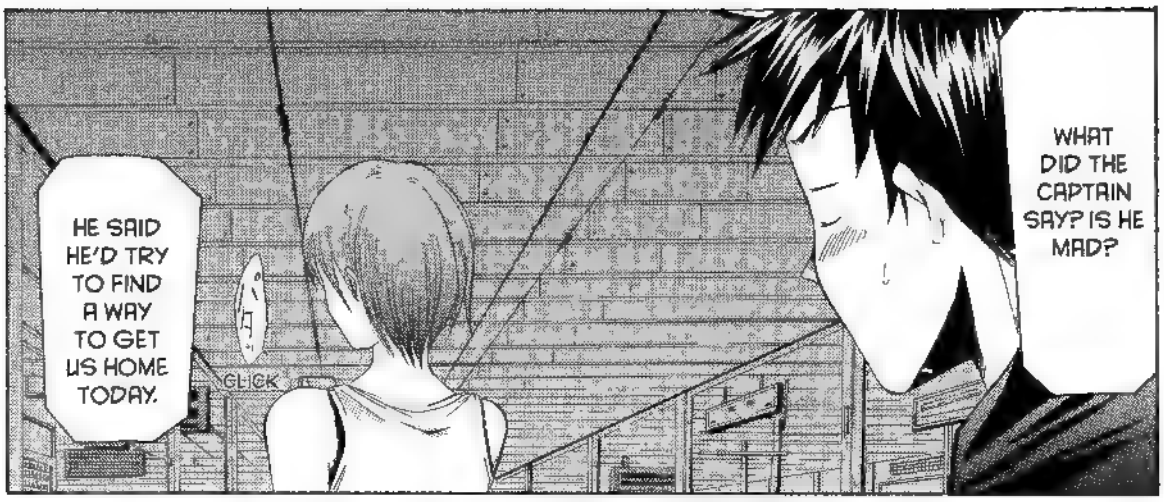
WHAT?
AKITSUKI AND ASAHINA AREN'T ON BOARD?
NO, THEY MISSED THE TRAIN.
WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH THOSE TWO?
CALL THEM! CALL ASAHINA ON HER CELL!
O-OKAY!
10
FIELDER
AKIT-SUKI-KUN AND...
...ASA-HINA-SAN?
.....
ドキン
THUMP
AKITSUKI-KUN...
THUMP
ドキン


PLEASE...
ANSWER...
AKITSUKI-KUN
F9ooi
CLICK
RING
RING
ZZZ
RING
RING
RING

AH.
RING RING
NOW WHAT DO WE DO?
THAT WAS THE LAST TRAIN!
DON'T ASK ME!

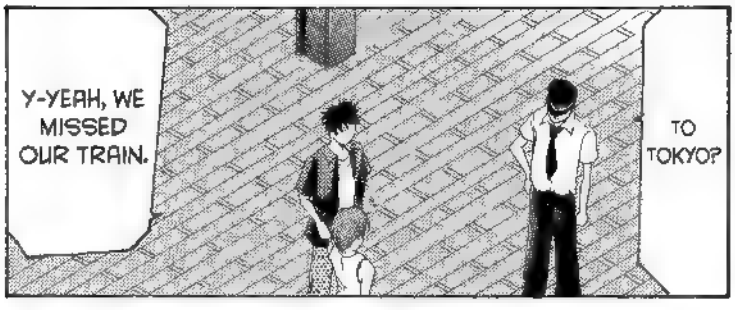
WHERE ARE YOU, ASAHINA?
MI-MIKI?

CLACK
WE'LL TRY TO THINK OF A WAY TO GET YOU HOME.
YOU GUYS SHOULD GO TALK TO SOME-ONE AT THE TICKET OFFICE.
CLACK
CAPTAIN? UM... WE'RE STILL ON THE PLATFORM...
YEAH... YAMATO-KUN AND I BOTH MISSED IT.


WHAT DID THE CAPTAIN SAY? IS HE MAD?
HE SAID HE'D TRY TO FIND A WAY TO GET US HOME TODAY.
GLICK

JR 広島
ひろしま Hiroshima
EAST HIROSHIMA
SHINI

LET'S GO ASK THE STATION ATTENDANT.
IT'S ONLY 7:30, SO WE MIGHT STILL HAVE A CHANCE.
O-OKAY!


Y-YEAH, WE MISSED OUR TRAIN.
TO TOKYO?

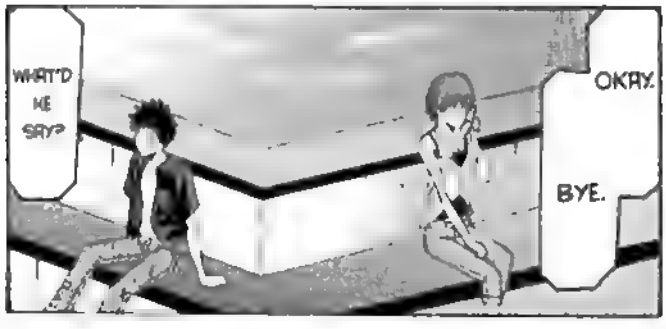
WELL, THERE AREN'T ANY MORE TOKYO-BOUND TRAINS TODAY.
THAT WAS THE LAST ONE.

BUT WE REALLY HAVE TO GET HOME. ISN'T THERE ANY OTHER WAY?
THOSE ONLY GO AS FAR AS OKAYAMA.
WELL, WHAT ABOUT A REGULAR LOCAL TRAIN?
I THINK THERE'S A NIGHT BUS THAT GOES TO TOKYO. YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO MAKE THAT ONE.
WELL, YOU COULD GO ASK OVER AT THE BUS CENTER.
WE'LL CHECK IT OUT!
O-OKAY...
FWOOSH
THANK YOU!
YEAH!
OH YEAH! WE COULD TAKE A BUS HOME.
HIROSHIMA
BUS CE

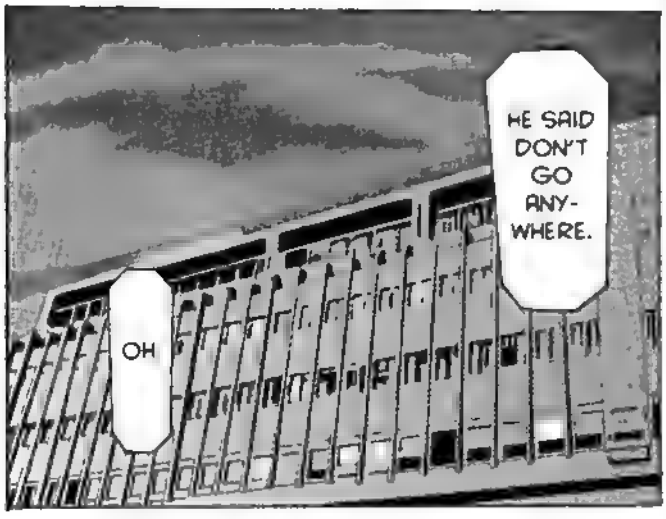
SORRY, BUT...
AT THIS TIME OF YEAR, YOU NEED RESERVATIONS IN ADVANCE. EVERYTHING IS FULL.
F-FULL?
.....
HUH?
ALL THOSE PEOPLE OVER THERE ARE ALREADY AHEAD OF YOU ON THE LIST.
W-WELL... CAN YOU PUT US ON THE STANDBY LIST?
SURE, I CAN, BUT...
CHATTER
CHATTER

YOU CAN WAIT HERE IF YOU WANT, BUT I DON'T THINK YOU'LL MAKE IT ON ANYTHING TODAY.

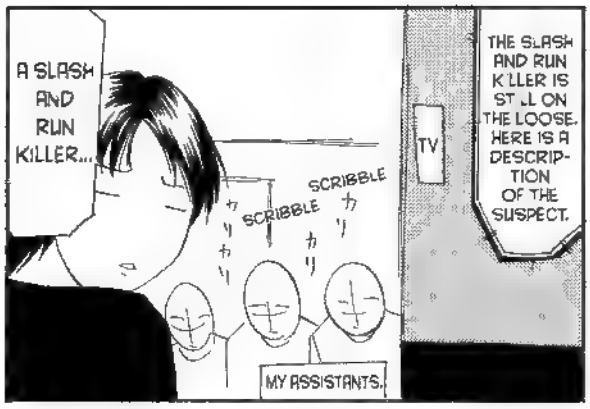
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT THEY TOLD US.
CLICK
CLACK
UH-HUH.

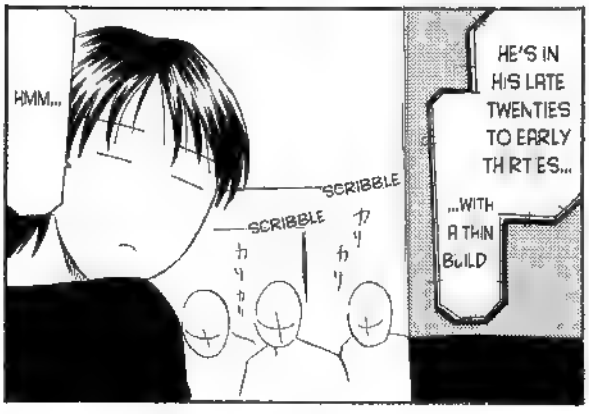

WHAT'D HE SAY?
OKAY.
BYE.

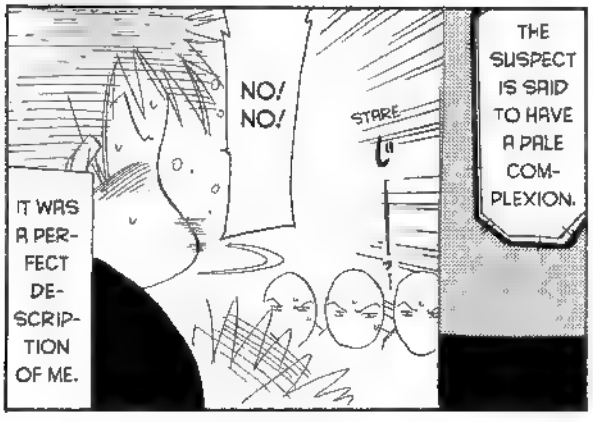
CLICK
CLACK
I'M GONNA CALL THE TEACHER, AND THEN GET BACK TO YOU.
DON'T GO ANY-WHERE.


OH
HE SAID DON'T GO ANY-WHERE.

WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO NOW?
.....
YEAH..
.....
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?


A SLASH AND RUN KILLER...
SCRIBBLE
SCRIBBLE
MY ASSISTANTS.
TV
THE SLASH AND RUN KILLER IS STILL ON THE LOOSE. HERE IS A DESCRIPTION OF THE SUSPECT.





SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER TWENTY-THREE

CRIMINAL TRAITS

SUZUKA

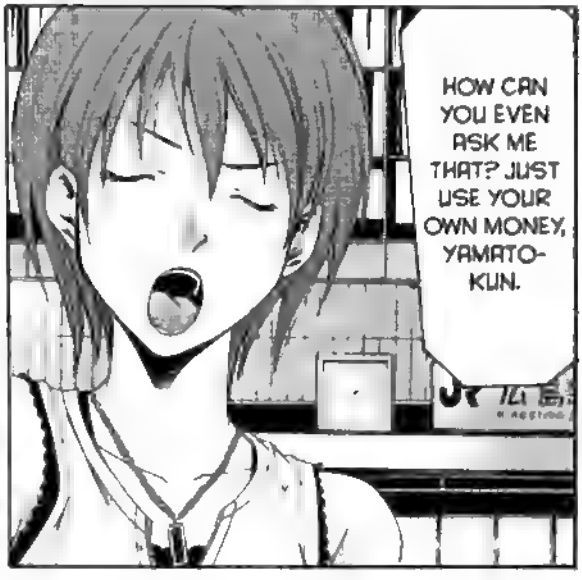
#39 TWO

THIS IS ALL MY FAULT.
SORRY
.....
UH...
WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT IT?

HEY, I KNOW!
LET'S GO DO KARAOKE OR GO HANG OUT IN AN ALL-NIGHT DINER.
FWUP
HUH?
WE CAN JUST KILL TIME UNTIL MORNING, AND TAKE THE FIRST BULLET TRAIN HOME.

SO, CAN YOU LEND ME A LITTLE MONEY?
I'LL PAY YOU BACK AS SOON AS WE GET TO TOKYO.
OKAY?

BUT...I ONLY HAVE 600 YEN*.
WHAT?


HOW CAN YOU EVEN ASK ME THAT? JUST USE YOUR OWN MONEY, YAMATO-KUN.

*¥6

YEAH, AND I WAS GONNA BORROW MONEY FOR THE TICKET FROM YOU
BUT YOU WERE GONNA TRY TO BUY A BUS TICKET HOME
WHY WOULD I HAVE ANY MONEY ON ME?! I JUMPED OUT OF THE TRAIN AT THE LAST MINUTE
OH YEAH

CARP! CARP! HIROSHIMA CARP!
HUH?
.....
YOU CHEATED ON HER, DIDN'T YOU, BUDDY?
PAT
PAT
PAT
WHAT'S WRONG, BUDDY? HAVE A FIGHT WITH YOUR GIRL-FRIEND?
HUH?
N-NO, NOT EXACTLY.
ALL MEN CHEAT, SO JUST GET OVER IT!
FORGIVE THE GUY!

WAH! YOU STINK LIKE BOOZE, PAL!
PYUUUU
YOU LOVE HER THE MOST, DON'T YOU, BUDDY?
DON'T YOU?
DON'T HIT IT TOO HARD, OR YOU'LL HURT YOURSELF, OKAY, BUDDY?
HEY, BOSS! WHAT'RE YOU DOING TALKING TO THOSE LITTLE BRATS?
THERE'S A LOVE HOTEL OVER THERE.
WHY DON'T YOU GO BANG ONE OUT, AND MAKE UP?
WHA—?
YOU'D BETTER SHUT UP, MAN!
YEAH, RIGHT.... WE DON'T EVEN HAVE THE MONEY TO GO TO A LOVE HOTEL.
RIGHT?

AH...NO! I DIDN'T MEAN IT LIKE THAT!
I SWEAR!
EVEN IF WE DID, I WOULDN'T GO.
AH!
UH... UM...
G- GOTTA CHANGE THE SUB- JECT!
HUH?
I'LL CALL MY DAD, AND BORROW SOME MONEY FROM HIM.
I KNOW! I'LL TRY CALLING HOME!

I'LL JUST GO STAY AT MY FOLK'S PLACE
AND THEN YOU CAN STAY AT A BUSINESS HOTEL AND GO BACK TOMORROW MORNING
NO. I THINK HE HAS THE DAY OFF TOMORROW ANYWAY
THAT'D BE NICE. BUT WON'T HE BE MAD... IF YOU IMPOSE ON HIM LIKE THAT?
WH- WHY?
I'LL JUST GO OVER HERE AND CALL HIM
CAN I BORROW YOUR CELL?
WHY? WHO ARE S?
I DO BYE
CAUSE I DON'T WANT YOU TO HEAR ME SPEAK HIRO-SHIMA DIALECT

OKAY
HE'S ON HIS WAY OVER NOW!
AH, MIKI? CAN YOU PUT THE CAPTAIN ON?
I'LL CALL THE CAPTAIN AND TELL HIM!
HE'S PROBABLY WORRIED SICK
YEAH
YEAH
YAMATO-KUN'S DAD IS ON HIS WAY OVER

HUH?
.....
.....?
H-HELLO?
OH GREAT.... HERE COMES THE LECTURE.
HERE.
HUH? HE WANTS TO TALK TO ME?
AKITSUKI-KUN?
.....!

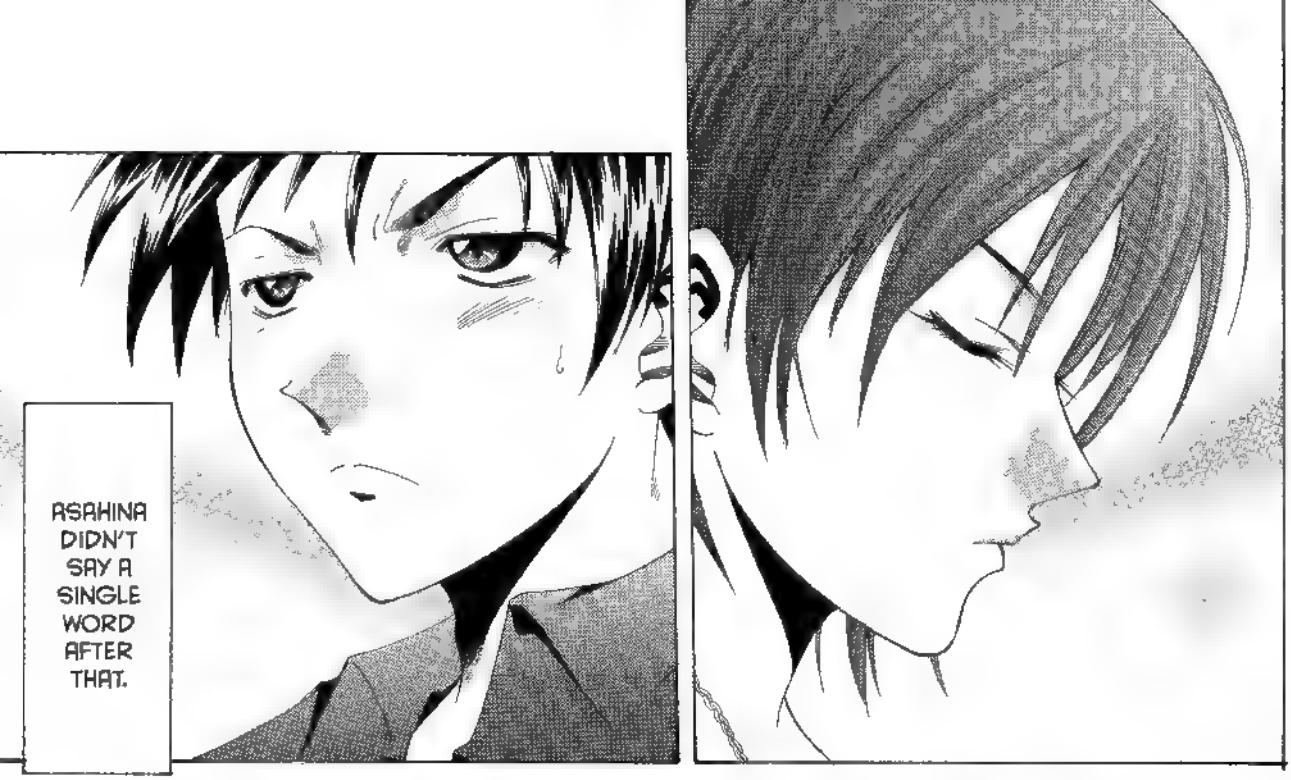
HO-HONOKA-CHAN?
ガトン
CLICK
UM...I HEARD YOU TWO MISSED THE TRAIN, AND I WAS SO WORRIED.
ガトン
CLICK
OH, YEAH, BUT WE'RE FINE.
MY DAD'S COMING.
UM...
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT.
DON'T WORRY.
HUH?
UM...
I'M GOING HOME BY MYSELF, SO...
YOU'VE GOT...
...NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

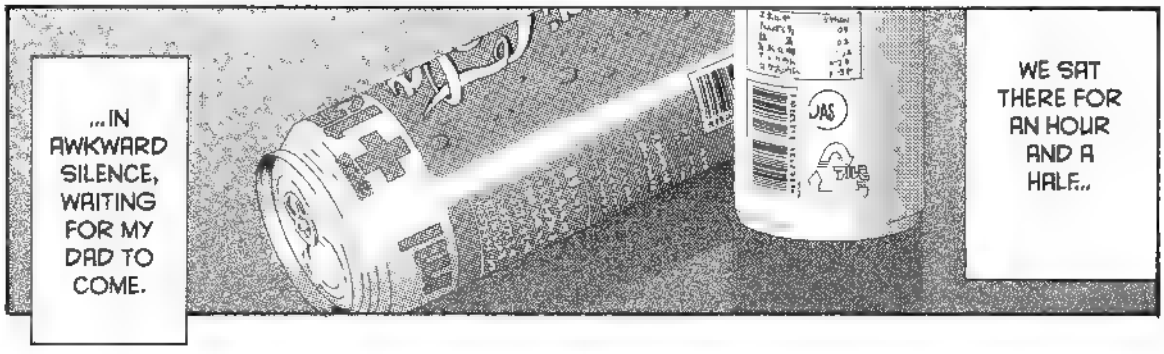
THANKS.
OKAY.
CLICK
I'LL CALL YOU WHEN I GET HOME.
OKAY
BYE.
SURE
AH!
THANKS.

SO... WERE YOU THE ONE...
HEY.
HUH?
...WHO ASKED HER TO GO WITH YOU?
HUH?
YEAH.
IT WAS ME.
UH...
TSSS
.....
OH.

SO YOU'RE IN LOVE...
...WITH HONOKA-CHAN?
I THINK SHE'S CUTE, AND...
SHE'S REALLY NICE AND CONSIDER-ATE.
UH...
HMM...
BUT THOSE AREN'T THE ONLY REA-SONS.
WHEN I'M WITH HER, I JUST FEEL REALLY RELAXED.
WELL... UM...

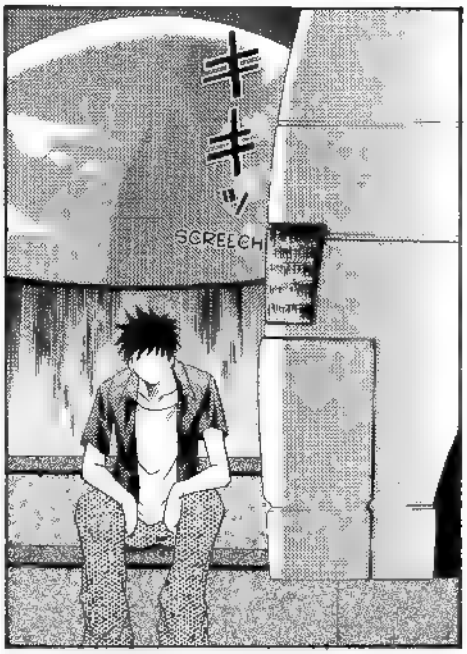
WHAT THE HELL?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO ASKED!
HUH?
THAT'S ENOUGH!
WHA—?
BLUSH
I DON'T NEED ALL THE DETAILS.
WHAT THE HELL IS YOUR PROBLEM? YOU'RE FUCKING CRAZY!
STEP
KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN! YOU'RE EMBAR-RASSING ME.
GOD, HOW STUPID ARE YOU?


ASAHINA DIDN'T SAY A SINGLE WORD AFTER THAT.

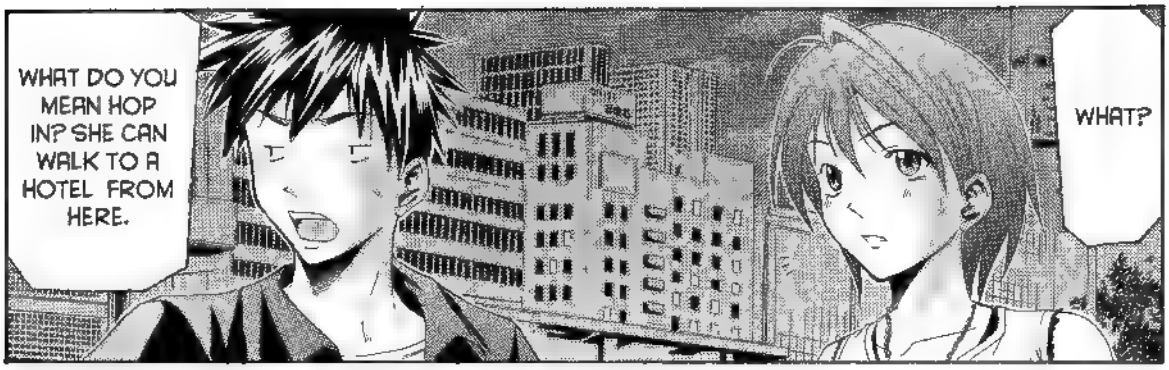

...IN AWKWARD SILENCE, WAITING FOR MY DAD TO COME.
WE SAT THERE FOR AN HOUR AND A HALF...

HUH?
AH... THAT'S HIM.

STEP
YOU'RE LATE, DAD—


SCREECH

?
SMACK
HUH?
I-I'M TERRIBLY SORRY FOR ALL THE TROUBLE.
YOU IDIOT! YOU MISSED THE TRAIN TO BUY SODA?
WAH!
THAT'S OKAY. IT WAS ALL YAMATO'S FAULT.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. NOW HOP IN!


WHAT DO YOU MEAN HOP IN? SHE CAN WALK TO A HOTEL FROM HERE.
WHAT?

YOU CAN STAY AT OUR PLACE TONIGHT, AND I'LL GIVE YOU A LIFT BACK HERE TOMORROW.
DON'T BE STUPID!
WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE A YOUNG GIRL ALONE OUT HERE AT THIS HOUR.

DO YOU MND S TTING IN THE BACK? T'S A LITTLE MESSY, BUT..
HEY!
HUH?
HUH?
DAD!
LISTEN TO ME!

ガチャ
CLICK
WH-WHAT?
YOU CAN'T DO THAT...

NOW GET IN THE GOD DAMN CAR, OR YOU'LL BE SLEEP-ING HERE TONIGHT!
SLAM
AH..
YEAH, YEAH, JUST SHUT UP, WILL YA?
BUT...
B—
ASAHINA...
...SLEEPING AT MY HOUSE?

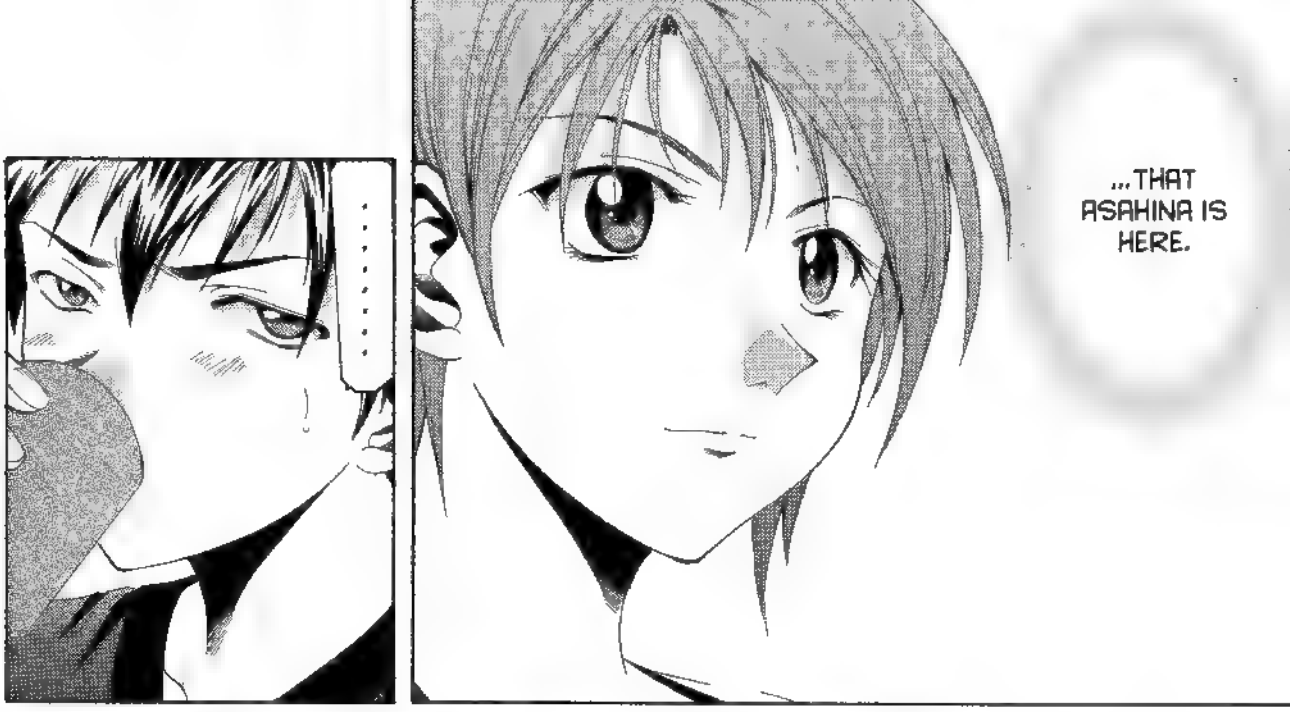
CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
I HAD TO DRIVE FOR THREE HOURS LAST NIGHT THANKS TO YAMATO.
AHH...I'M SO TIRED
AKITSUKI
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SORRY, SUZUKA-CHAN.
RIGHT, HONEY?
I'M REALLY SORRY.
YOU NEED TO EAT MORE, YAMATO LOOK HOW THIN YOU'VE GOTTEN.
PUT THAT CIGA-RETTE OUT.
AH... SORRY
WHA—
SLURP

WHAT THE HELL IS HAPPENING?
HELP YOURSELF, SUZUKA-CHAN.
AH. THANK YOU.
ANOTHER HELPING, YAMATO?
LEAVE HIM BE.
HE SAID HE DOESN'T WANT ANY
WANT A BONE, MIIKO?
THOSE ARE MY CHOPSTICKS, DAD.

SUZUKA

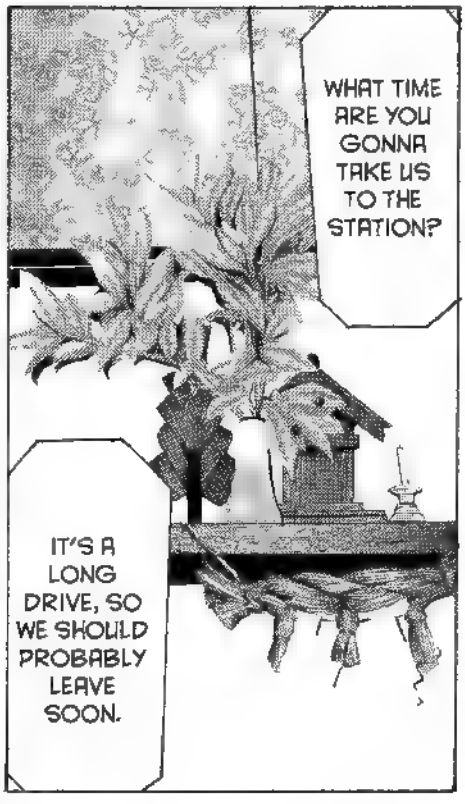
#40 HOME

YOUR FATHER'S RIGHT, YAMATO.
YOU SHOULD'VE JUST GONE TO SCHOOL IN HIROSHIMA.
MOM (HOUSEWIFE/ PART-TIME WORKER) KOTONO AKITSUKI
YOU'RE ALWAYS SCREW-ING AROUND, YAMATO.
THAT'S WHY YOU MISSED THE TRAIN!
FATHER (SELF-EMPLOYED) YOSHIO AKITSUKI
IT'S NICE JUST TO HAVE HIM BACK HOME.
GRANDMOTHER HATSUKO AKITSUKI
GIVE HIM A BREAK, KOTONO-SAN.
YEP, THIS IS IT...
THE LIFE I HAD FOR SIXTEEN LONG YEARS.
...ALL THE MORE WEIRD...
THAT'S WHY IT MAKES IT SEEM...
YUP.
YOU MIGHT LIVE IN TOKYO, BUT YOU STILL LOOK LIKE A LOSER, YAMATO.
LITTLE BROTHER (FIFTH GRADE) HIRAKAZU AKITSUKI
LITTLE SISTER (EIGHTH GRADE) RIE AKITSUKI


.....
...THAT ASAHINA IS HERE.

DON'T MAKE HER EAT THAT CRAP!
I'LL TRY SOME.
HAVE SOME SEA CUCUMBER, SUZUKA-CHAN. IT'S DELICIOUS.

I'M BUSY UNTIL THIS AFTER-NOON, SO...
WE'LL LEAVE AROUND FOUR, AND IF THERE'S NOT TOO MUCH TRAFFIC, WE SHOULD MAKE IT BY SIX-THIRTY.

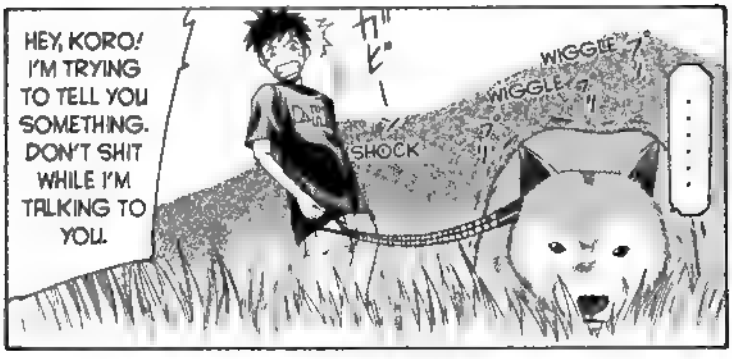

WHAT TIME ARE YOU GONNA TAKE US TO THE STATION?
IT'S A LONG DRIVE, SO WE SHOULD PROBABLY LEAVE SOON.

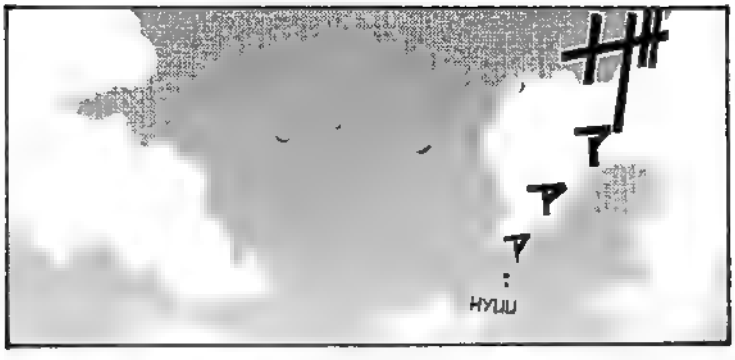
I WOULDN'T MIND, BUT ASAHINA CAN'T.
YOU'RE ALREADY GOING HOME, YAMATO?
BUT YOU JUST GOT HERE. WHY DON'T YOU STAY A WHILE?
RIGHT, MIIKO?
YEAH, HE'S THE ONE WHO DROPPED THE SODA.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. IT WAS ALL YAMATO'S FAULT.
SHUT UP, YOU TWO.
I'M SORRY...
YOU GUYS WILL JUST HAVE TO KILL SOME TIME.
SLIDE
ガラ ガラ
WELL, I'VE GOTTA BE GOING.
...TO CAUSE YOU SO MUCH TROUBLE.
.....
OKAY.

#11
CREAK
I CAN'T JUST IGNORE HER ALL DAY.
THIS IS REALLY AWK-WARD, BUT...
H-HEY...
YAM-ATO-KUN.
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
HEY, ASAHINA. WANT ME TO SHOW YOU AROUND A LITTLE?
.....
BUT WE'VE GOT A FEW HOURS BEFORE IT'S TIME TO GO.
GRR
THAT'S OKAY.
JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.
Da Hui
SHORE DAIU

HUH?
WE COULD TAKE THE DOG OUT FOR A WALK, AND--
RE-CHAN LET ME BORROW SOME CLOTHES.
AND SHE BOUGHT ME SOME UNDER-WEAR.
WHEN WE GET BACK, I'LL HAVE TO GET SOME-THING FOR HER.
UM.
BUZZ
BUZZ
BUZZ
UH...
YEAH...
BUZZ
BUZZ
BUZZ
OKAY.
UNLESS YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.

GEEZ...I TRY TO BE NICE, AND THAT'S WHAT I GET.
PANT
PANT


HEY, KORO! I'M TRYING TO TELL YOU SOMETHING. DON'T SHIT WHILE I'M TALKING TO YOU.
カビー
WIGGLE
WIGGLE
SHOCK
.....


HYUU

I GUESS THIS PLACE IS JUST...
...TOO BORING FOR ASAHINA.

I KNOW IT'S MY FAULT THAT WE ENDED UP HERE, BUT...
DOES SHE HAVE TO BE SUCH A BITCH ABOUT IT, KORO?

I WAS JUST OVER BY THAT RIVER, AND I SAW TONS OF FISH.
WANNA GO CHECK IT OUT WITH ME?
H-HEY, ASA-HINA.
CREAK
I TOLD YOU TO LEAVE ME ALONE, DIDN'T I?
OKAY
AH!

AT NIGHT THEY FLY AROUND THE RIVER BANK
.....
ACTUALLY, AT THIS TIME OF YEAR
THERE'RE LOTS OF FIREFLIES AROUND THE RIVER
D. Hug
S-SO.
IF YOU WANT TO SEE THEM, YOU COULD STAY HERE ANOTHER NIGHT, ASAKINA.
I TOLD YOU TO LEAVE ME ALONE!
HEY, ARE YOU LISTENING?
.....
SHUT UP!

WHA—!
SNAP
カチン
WHAT THE HELL IS YOUR PROBLEM? YOU'VE BEEN A NONSTOP BITCH SINCE LAST NIGHT!
I DON'T GET YOU AT ALL!
HUH?
YEAH, WELL I DON'T GET YOU.
FIRST, YOU WANNA GO FOR A WALK....
...THEN YOU WANT ME TO STAY ANOTHER NIGHT.

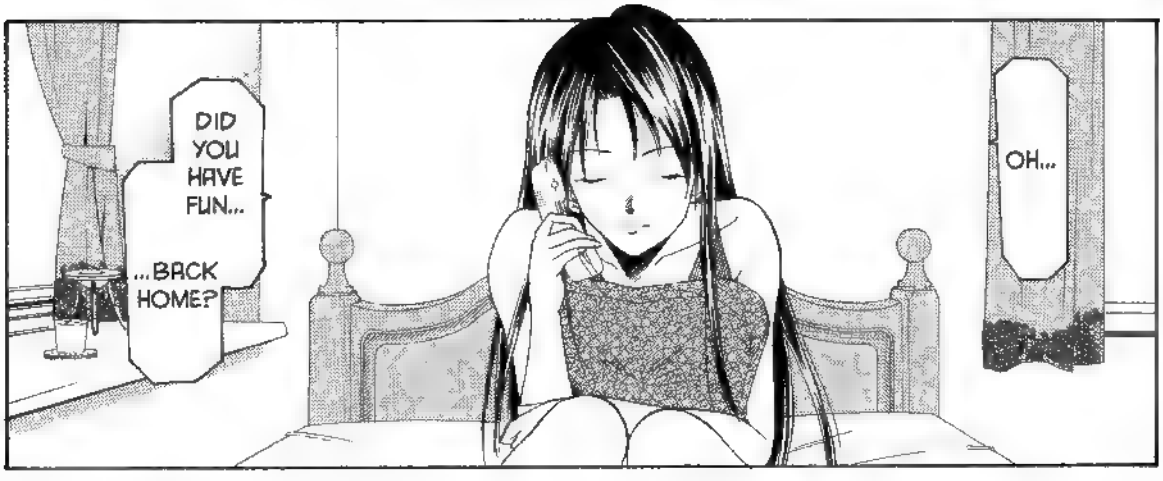
JUST WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TRYING TO DO?

!

...SAVING THOSE OFFERS FOR SOMEONE ELSE?
SHOULDN'T YOU BE...
FWEESH

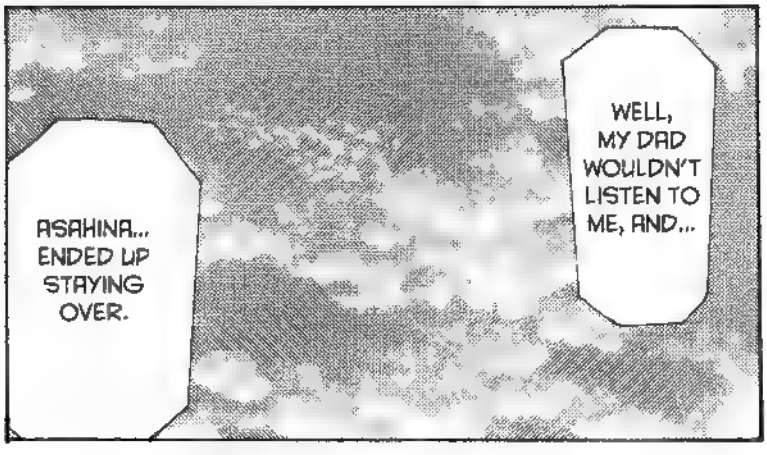
BUT I'VE BEEN TOTALLY OBLIVIOUS...
ASAKIRA IS TRYING TO DO RISHI BY HONOKA-CHAN
SHE PROBABLY THINKS I'M JUST TRYING TO BE A PLAYER

I WENT TO MY PARENT'S PLACE LAST NIGHT.
YEAH.


DID YOU HAVE FUN...
...BACK HOME?
OH...

UM...
WHAT?

YEAH.
AND...
UH...


ASAHINA... ENDED UP STAYING OVER.
WELL, MY DAD WOULDN'T LISTEN TO ME, AND...

I WOULDN'T TRY ANYTHING ANYWAY.
B-BUT WE'RE COMING HOME TODAY, AND...
UH-HUH.
OKAY.
WELL, YEAH...
BUT YOUR WHOLE FAMILY WAS THERE, RIGHT?
HUH?
UH...I THOUGHT YOU'D BE MAD.
YEAH, I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.
SO IT'S NO BIG DEAL.

HA, HA!
NO, NOT EVEN!
SERIOUS
YEAH
WE'RE GONNA LEAVE PRETTY SOON
OKAY I'LL CALL YOU WHEN I GET HOME
BYE
CLICK
ガチャン

HEY!
HEY, ASAHINA.
MY DAD WILL BE HOME SOON, SO WE SHOULD PROBABLY GET READY.
STEP
ARE THEY OUT OF THE WASH?
WHAT ABOUT YOUR CLOTHES?
HEY...
PURR

HUH?
MAYBE I WILL STAY...
...JUST ONE MORE DAY.
WH-WHY?

UH...
UM...
I WANT TO...
...SEE THE FIREFLIES.
O... KAY...
BUZZ
BUZZ
CONTINUED IN VOLUME 6

Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more an art than a science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.

Nakata, page 72

Hidetoshi Nakata is a famous Japanese soccer player who recently shocked the soccer world when he retired at age twenty-nine. He has played for both Japanese and Italian teams.

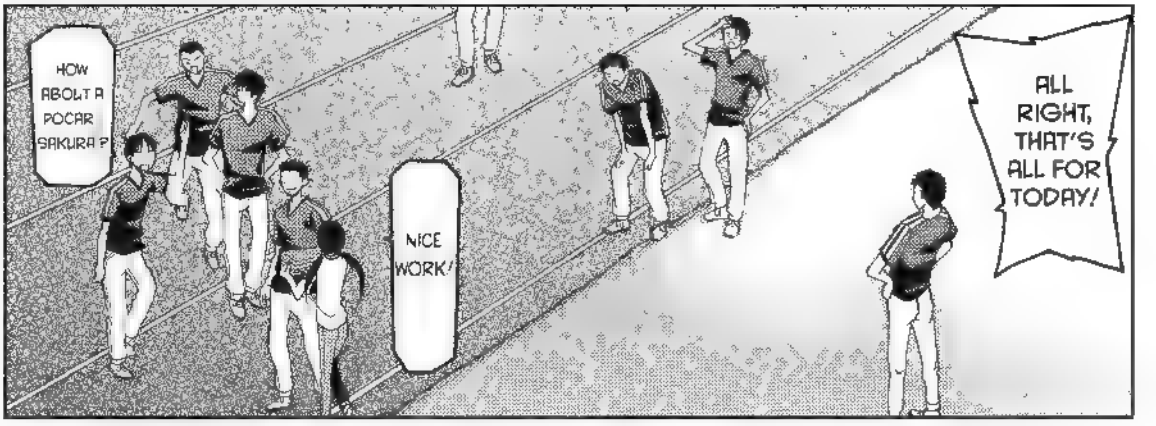
HEY, WILL YOU RECORD THAT SOCCER GAME FOR ME? THE ONE NAKATA IS PLAYING IN.
SO? HOW'S AUS-TRALIA?
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE IN AN-OTHER COUN-TRY!

An outside bath!, page 99

Japanese inns often have communal baths. The baths are generally separated into male and female sections by a bamboo fence or other structure.

Pocari, page 115

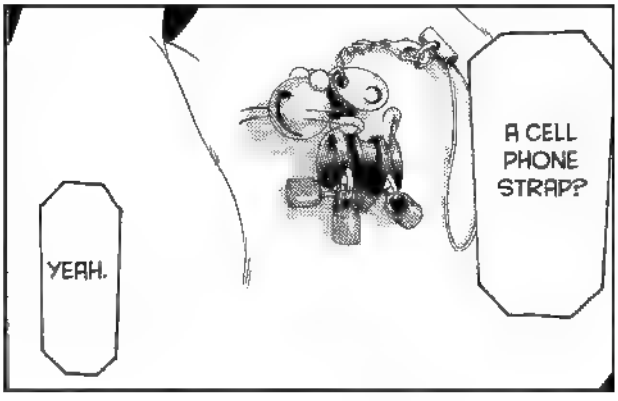
Pocari Sweat is a popular Japanese sports drink.



Okonomiyaki, page 135

Hiroshima is famous for *okonomiyaki*—a Japanese-style pancake. It's made of batter and a mixture of meat, vegetables, and egg. Hiroshima-style *okonomiyaki* generally includes noodles as well.

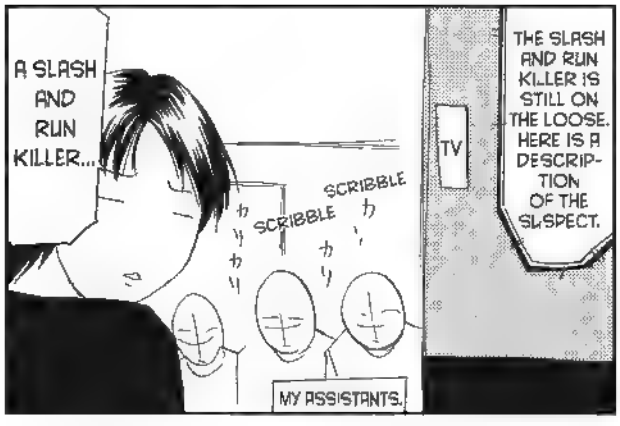
I-I'LL FIND IT!
MAP
HAVE WE BEEN GOING AROUND IN CIRCLES?
HEY, AKITSUKI! WHERE'S THIS GREAT OKONOMIYAKI PLACE YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT?



Cell phone strap, page 137

Cell phone straps are little straps, often with cute characters tied onto them, that people attach to their cell phones.

Slash and run killer, page 152


A SLASH AND RUN KILLER...
SCRIBBLE
SCRIBBLE
MY ASSISTANTS.
TV
THE SLASH AND RUN KILLER IS STILL ON THE LOOSE. HERE IS A DESCRIPTION OF THE SUSPECT.

Slash and run killings, or *toorima,* are a common crime phenomenon in Japan. In a slash and run, the perpetrator picks out a random target on the street, casually passes by, stabs them, and then flees the scene.

Hiroshima Carp, page 158

The Hiroshima Carp are a baseball team. This inebriated fellow is singing the Carp's theme song.

Love hotel, page 159

Love hotels are specifically designed for couples seeking privacy. They can be rented by the night or, during the daytime, by the hour.

Preview of Volume 6

We're pleased to present you with a preview of *Suzuka,* Volume 6.
This volume will be available on November 27, 2007.

HUH?
WHA-?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? STOP MESSING WITH ME!
I'M NOT
..MESSING WITH YOU.

WH-?
WHAT?

HUH?
PSYCH! JUST KIDDING.
WHOA!
Y-YOU'RE SUCH A LITTLE—!
DID YOU ACTU-ALLY THINK I WAS SERI-OUS?
YOU TURNED BEET RED! YOU'RE SUCH AN IDIOT.

Gacha Gacha
THE NEXT REVOLUTION

HIROYUKI TAMAKOSHI

JUST ONE OF THE GIRLS

A whole new Gacha Gacha story line begins! Akira Hatsushiba is just your typical, average high school kid . . . until a glitch in a Gacha Gacha video game changes his life forever. Now, every time Akira sneezes, his entire body undergoes a gender-bending switcheroo! That's right, Akira is always just an *achoo* away from getting in touch with his feminine side. But it's not all bad. Akira has had a crush on Yurika Sakuraba ever since he first laid eyes on her. He's always been too shy, but now that he can change into a girl, Akira finally has a chance to get close to Yurika. Being a girl certainly has its advantages!

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